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BRICS ACADEMIC REVIEW



BRICS: LIFE IN THE TIME OF COVID-19 BRASILIA: BRAZIL'S SEAT OF POWER

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Covid-19



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CEO NOTE

Seeing the World Through the Covid-19 Lens



We started the year 2020 with all the hope and positivity that a new decade brings. Rolling up our sleeves, we were ready to put in the work required to build our organisations and businesses. We were similarly primed to implement the resolutions from the 11th BRICS Academic Forum – held in Brasilia, the capital of Brazil, in September last year – dealing with the following key issues: financing for development; trade and investment;

science, technology and innovation; energy and development; transnational crime; and agriculture.

In addition to the the issues listed above, delegates also discussed exploring ways to achieve greater BRICS market integration. These included determining common rules for banking systems and stock markets, as well as for clearing procedures and preventing anti-corruption and offshore activities. The possibility of creating a BRICS visa was also discussed.

We were looking forward to reporting on more resolutions from Brasilia, such as the establishment of a common digital trade policy agenda, the promotion of food security, and the growth of transnational crime linked to increased access to the internet.

Then everything changed. The coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic broke out, spreading like wildfire across the globe and setting off a chain reaction that was felt everywhere – including in the production of this edition of the *BRICS Academic Review*. Just as we were in the throes of putting this publication together, the situation forced a change in editorial direction to include substantial coverage of the pandemic.

It could not be otherwise. Covid-19 has brought unimaginable challenges for Africa and the rest of the world. At the time of writing this editorial, an estimated 345 122 people have died after contracting the disease, leaving many families grieving the loss of loved ones or fearing having to face death alone.

The burden of sickness and death has fallen overwhelmingly on the most vulnerable in society: those living in conditions of poverty and deprivation. While the correlation between race, poverty and health is well documented, this pandemic has brought the crisis right to the forefront and serves as a grim reminder of how much still needs to be achieved to redress inequality.

At a national level, the virus is being tackled on many fronts. From doctors, epidemiologists, herbalists and other health workers to politicians, educators, media practitioners and technologists, professionals are weighing in and offering their expertise to help us through this unprecedented crisis. On a global scale, we have seen nations collaborating to halt the spread of the virus while a vaccine is being sought.

The subject of vaccine development is close to the hearts of BRICS-affiliated researchers and academics. At the 10th BRICS Summit held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2018, leaders agreed to establish a state-of-the-art BRICS Vaccine Research Centre in Johannesburg. The Covid-19 outbreak has brought even greater urgency to achieving this resolution. It also highlights the need for a co-ordinated approach to be taken among BRICS member states when it comes to vaccine development, ensuring that each country's strengths are utilised for the benefit of this bloc and of the world at large.

“The Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic broke out, spreading like wildfire across the globe and setting off a chain reaction that was felt everywhere – including in the production of this edition of the *BRICS Academic Review*.”

Another major initiative that is strengthening the BRICS bond is the Emergency Assistance Programme Loan spearheaded by the New Development Bank to help member states combat Covid-19. The fast-tracking of this facility demonstrates that unity and co-operation among the BRICS countries is actionable and practical.

Certainly, closing ranks and ensuring the safety and wellness of BRICS citizens will be at the top of the agenda at this year's BRICS Academic Forum, due to take place (most likely virtually) in Moscow from 20 to 22 May. The theme for the upcoming event is "BRICS' new vision for a better world", and it features a line-up of plenary and panel sessions that are sure to generate a host of ideas and potential solutions to the dramatic changes that Covid-19 has wrought on governments and citizens worldwide.

The plenary session titled "A Shifting World Order and the Emergence of a New Governance Paradigm: Challenges and Opportunities for the BRICS" is particularly pertinent now, when the current international order is experiencing so much economic turmoil and uncertainty. For the BRICS bloc, in addition to the persistent challenges that need addressing are emerging ones demanding immediate attention, not least the gridlock in the international monetary and trade system reforms. It will be fascinating to listen to the perspectives of Academic Forum delegates on the role that BRICS member states should play in shaping a new model for multilateral global governance.

If anything is clear about the chaos that now reigns in international affairs, it is that BRICS provides an opportunity to consolidate the views of non-Western countries on the global agenda. A level of global solidarity unprecedented in modern times is possible if, with BRICS acting

“The theme for the event is 'BRICS' new vision for a better world', and it features a line-up of plenary and panel sessions that are sure to generate a host of ideas and potential solutions to the dramatic changes that Covid-19 has wrought on governments and citizens worldwide.”

as a global crisis manager, world bodies are able to unite and determine “rules of the game” that meet the interests of all nations, not just Western ones.

The call for global solidarity has been further echoed by the World Health Organisation's (WHO) director-general, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. “This virus is dangerous,” he said recently. “It exploits cracks between us. We need global solidarity that's cemented on genuine national unity. Without national unity and global solidarity, trust us, the worst is yet ahead of us. Let's prevent this tragedy.”

On the home front, help in fighting the pandemic has come from an old ally. South Africa and Cuba have close ties as Cuba was instrumental in the fight against apartheid rule in South Africa. The relationship has endured, and now more than 200 Cuban doctors have arrived on our shores to offer their expertise in curbing the spread of Covid-19. They are among 1 200 healthcare workers sent to battle Covid-19 in 22 countries that have requested help from the communist state, whose much-admired healthcare system has helped the Caribbean island deal with the virus more effectively than most.

Requesting Cuba's assistance during this crisis is one of a number of sure-footed steps the South African government has taken to deal with the pandemic. As the WHO itself has recognised, South Africa has done well

in managing this crisis to date, with the presidency showing the calibre of leadership that has inspired the confidence of its citizens by reassuring us that the pandemic can be brought under control and taking the requisite action.

That said, the socio-economic fallout from Covid-19 is deeply concerning, carrying with it the very real risk that the country will be plunged further into a cycle of unemployment, inequality and poverty, from which it will take years to recover. Our ongoing survey conducted around four South African townships (in Alexandra, Diepsloot, Khayelitsha and Umlazi) has provided a glimpse of the devastation being caused, with the burden of disease being carried by women – as usual – and sharpening the crisis around unemployment and inequality.

This is not the first time South Africa has faced a seemingly insurmountable challenge. The last such challenge was against the ruthless machinery of the apartheid era. We met that challenge with the help of our friends, just as we will meet this one – again, with the help of our friends.

PROF SARAH MOSOETSA
Chief Executive Officer
National Institute for the Humanities
and Social Sciences (NIHSS),
custodians of the South African
BRICS Think Tank (SABTT)

VUYO DLAMINI

The New Normal



There are balls of scented and colourful playdough splattered all over the floor as my now home-schooled toddler enjoys a lesson in fine motor skills development. I'm by the kitchen counter just a few metres away, putting together the Round-up section (8-13) of this issue. I'm working from a farm on the outskirts of Mazini, eSwatini (formerly known as Swaziland); it was meant to have been my lockdown location for 21 days but will continue to be my home until President Cyril Ramaphosa announces the lifting of the lockdown in South Africa.

The President has been commended for his decisive leadership, which has helped South Africa to "flatten the curve" in terms of controlling the number of people infected by the Covid-19 coronavirus.

Almost 500km away, in his home studio, this journal's art director is selecting images from all five BRICS member states showing the great lengths that each country has gone to in order to ensure that the number of casualties of this health war are kept to a minimum.

Further afield, in Russia, resides the contributor of our Insight feature (page 36-38), Vladimir Korovkin. Unlike South Africans, Russians can shop for their favourite vodka from the local supermarket. Each country has its own way of dealing with the pandemic and

faces a different challenge, depending on the shape of the curve. It's all about coming up with the most effective strategy to preserve life and prevent a spiking curve, which would indicate an exponential rise in infections – and fatalities.

These are trying times for all of humanity. It makes the establishment of a BRICS Vaccine Research Centre – which has been on the cards for a few years now – all the more urgent. The centre, set to be built in Johannesburg, was on the agenda at the 11th BRICS summit, held in November last year in Brasilia, capital of Brazil. At the two-day gathering, President Ramaphosa told delegates: "We must continue to collectively work together to implement the important initiatives that we have agreed on at past summits and during this one, including the creation of the physical BRICS Vaccine Research Centre in South Africa."

A vaccine is what is needed to stop the Covid-19 pandemic in its tracks, and such a centre could go a long way in helping to find it. Also, seeing Africa getting involved in formulating an effective treatment would make citizens proud and less sceptical of all the precautionary measures being implemented.

Who is better positioned to give people credible information – backed up by research – about what is really going on – than scholars? This community needs to share their knowledge about the virus and dispel the many myths and fake news reports that have been circulating. Scientists, researchers, epidemiologists and other health professionals also need to continuously communicate with the public and spell out the facts regarding this virus. That way, people will be equipped with knowledge about how best to protect

themselves and their families against Covid-19. The important role that those in the humanities and social sciences field can play was affirmed by Dr Bonginkosi Nzimande, Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, when he said: "At a deeper level, we also look to our social scientists, philosophers, historians, artists and others to help us rebuild our sense of nationhood, our independence and our ability to take our place proudly in the community of nations."

Ignorance creates fear. It is okay to say: "I don't know much about this topic; let me ask my colleague." We need each other more than ever, not just professionally but also in relation to our common humanity. This sense of community was palpable at the fifth instalment of the Humanities and Social Sciences Awards, which took place on 12 March at Constitution Hill in Johannesburg. The event was held three days before the president declared the country to be in a national state of disaster.

A heartfelt thank you to those who came out to honour the creatives, the academics and the authors who were recognised for their outstanding contributions. In hindsight, your presence seems more like a sacrifice. It is possible that we won't be able to congregate like this for a long time to come – which makes the evening all the more memorable. We hope that you enjoyed the awards ceremony and were inspired by all this talent living amongst us. We showcase some key moments of the night in the Events Gallery feature (page 74-78).

May we all get to gather again soon. In the meantime, focus on washing hands, keeping your distance and staying safe and well. You can pop us a tweet or an email and tell us your thoughts. **BR**



TIME TO TALK?

We'd love
to hear
from you!

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OVERVIEW

INSIGHTS, NEWS AND COMMENTARY ABOUT BRICS

COMPILED BY VUYO DLAMINI

HIGHLIGHTS



NIHSS signs MoU with CASS

T The National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen and facilitate collaboration between the NIHSS and CASS in matters of common interest, and to promote cooperation to enhance mutual understanding and friendship between the parties in particular and the two countries in general.

AREAS OF ACTIVITIES

To promote academic exchange and collaboration, both the NIHSS and the CASS will consult in developing such activities by doing the following:

- Encouraging visits by research fellows from one party to the other for the purposes of engaging in research or other educational activities;
- Encouraging collaborative research

projects, carried out by scholars from both the NIHSS and the CASS;

- Co-sponsoring and organising joint conferences, symposia and workshops on topics of mutual interest;
- Fostering the exchange of publications and academic information; and
- Promoting other activities that will enhance the abovementioned goals.

In promoting these activities, the NIHSS and the CASS will focus on topics of mutual interest in the humanities and social sciences.

ABOUT CASS

The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), established in 1977, is the highest academic institution and national research centre in the fields of the humanities and social sciences, as well as a top think-tank of the People's Republic of China.

SABTT signs MoU with NCR BRICS

T The South African BRICS Think Tank (SABTT) and Russia's National Committee for BRICS Research (NCR BRICS) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at enhancing relations between the two think tanks and developing academic and cultural exchanges in the areas of research and education, along with other activities. The two have agreed to collaborate in the development of track II activities.

Areas of cooperation will include projects offered by either think tank which are felt to be desirable and feasible for developing and strengthening relations between SABTT and NCR BRICS. However, any specific project to be established will be subject to mutual consent, the availability of funds and the approval of each think tank. Such projects may include:

- joint research projects
- joint educational projects
- joint conferences
- exchange of experts
- internship programmes
- joint cultural projects
- other joint activities as agreed upon by both SABTT and NCR BRICS.

ABOUT NCR BRICS

The National Committee for BRICS Research was established as a non-profit partnership by the Russkiy Mir Foundation in collaboration with the Russian Academy of Sciences, with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. This was done pursuant to the plan of action approved by the President of the Russian Federation for implementation of agreements reached at the BRICS Summit in Sanya, China. The primary goal of this committee is to promote Russia's position and its expert assessments internationally, and to coordinate the activities of leading research organisations and experts regarding BRICS.



Symposium

Left to right:
Mr Bruno Carvalho Arruda,
Mr Dmitry Zudin, Dr. Philani Mthembu,
Ms Auriel Niemack, Prof. Nirmala
Gopal, Prof Siphamandla Zondi,
Mr Ashraf Patel



About: Mr Bruno Carvalho Arruda is the point of contact for Economic Affairs, Agriculture and BRICS at the Embassy of Brazil in Pretoria, South Africa

Summary of Keynote Address

During Brazil's 2019 chairship, the five BRICS countries were clear about their intentions to make cooperation more inclusive by supporting the spirit of cooperation among business, scholars, media and civil society organisations, as well as building upon government interactions. Brazil, under the theme of the summit – "BRICS: Economic Growth for an Innovative Future" – aimed to promote deliverables that would have a direct impact on the lives of societies and to emphasise and maximise what BRICS means to all people, while emphasising the equal role and participation of the BRICS countries. This is inclusive of the BRICS outreach programme, which started with South Africa inviting the African continent in 2013. During 2019, the Heads of State met twice; once informally in Osaka, Japan, on the margins of the G20 Summit, and again, at the annual 11th Summit from 13-14 November 2019, held in Brasilia.

As a summary of events, the Brazilian chairship convened 16 ministerial-level

meetings, which included ministers from the following sectors: foreign affairs, economy, health, technology and innovation, communications, environment, agriculture, energy, culture, labour, trade and national security.

The summit priorities included: strengthening cooperation in science, technology and innovation; enhancing cooperation on the digital economy; invigorating cooperation on the fight against transnational crime, especially against organised crime, money laundering and drug trafficking; and encouraging the rapprochement between the New Development Bank (NDB) and the BRICS Business Council. The summit Declaration and other approved documents are a collective position on what BRICS has to say to the world. Moreover, it emphasised four key areas that are paramount to the BRICS partnership:

- 1) strengthening and reforming the multilateral system;
- 2) fostering closer economic and financial cooperation;
- 3) noting the importance of regional issues in the greater geopolitical context; and
- 4) refining intra-BRICS cooperation.

The official handover of the chairship to Russia took place from 12-13 December at the sixth meeting of BRICS Sherpas/Sous-Sherpas.

New Development Bank's Africa Regional Centre



About: Ms Vivian Ramathuba is the senior professional at the NDB Africa Regional Centre

Ms Vivian Ramathuba provided an update on the work of the New Development Bank (NDB) since the Board of Governors met in April 2019 in Cape Town. She pointed to the NDB's potential role in working with the Business Council. The next round of funding approval would consider the new strategy document, still focusing on hard infrastructure projects such as energy, transport and urban development, as well as soft infrastructure. Having engaged with civil society organisations (CSOs), the NDB will start looking at how the bank may become more inclusive through its interface with CSOs, particularly when it comes to improving communication. The opening of regional offices has also been fast-tracked because they are noted as key institutional offices that may facilitate the number of projects that are proposed and considered bankable. At present, the Shanghai, Johannesburg and Brasilia offices have been opened, and there are plans to open the offices in Russia and India this year. South Africa is still experiencing challenges in contributing to the project preparation facility, but is working at improving on this.

The loans have been approved to 2021. Initially, South Africa received 8% approval; now it has been increased to 18% approval, to the value of US\$2.2 billion. The role of the Africa Regional Centre (ARC) on the ground has been to interact with government departments and state-owned enterprises in preparing to identify and submit bankable projects. The ARC has targeted a further US\$1.6 billion, which has been pledged by the NDB, but the preparation of projects from initial submission needs to be improved upon as a point of priority.

Going forward, it is the long-term intention of the bank to sign new membership and generate more business and more delivery. This is a key role of the ARC: to service the African continent and act as a liaison point with the NDB. It is important for South Africa to strengthen the market; South Africa and the regional office use both the South African Rand and US Dollar currencies, and South Africa will be launching its South African Rand/ZAR10 billion bond on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, which will increase local participation. The ARC and the NDB have partnered with the Business Council and together, have completed their first roadshow in the Western Cape.

Source <https://www.igd.org.za/>

BRICS CHINA

New Development Bank issues Coronavirus Combating Bond raising RMB 5 billion

O On 2 April 2020, the New Development Bank (NDB) successfully issued a three-year RMB Coronavirus Combating Bond in the China Interbank Bond Market. The Bank raised RMB 5 billion, garnered interest from a high-quality diversified investor base both onshore in mainland China, as well as offshore. The bond was priced at the lower end of the announced pricing range, and the transaction represents the largest-ever RMB-denominated bond as well as the first RMB-denominated Coronavirus Combating Bond issued by the Multilateral Development Bank in China.

The aim of this bond issue is to support the Chinese government in the financing of public health expenditure in Hubei, Guangdong and Henan provinces that were hit the hardest by Covid-19. The proceeds of the bond will be fully utilised to finance the RMB 7 billion Emergency Assistance Program Loan to the People's Republic of China approved by the Board of Directors of the Bank on 19 March 2020. This loan will contribute in a material fashion to

improving the resilience of the public health sector in the three provinces.

"Since the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus Disease -19 (Covid-19) in December 2019, the lives of people and the economy have been heavily impacted," said Mr Leslie Maasdorp, NDB vice-president and CFO. "NDB is fully committed to supporting our member countries during this period of crisis to fight the spread of Covid-19 and stands ready to provide the necessary financing to meet this objective."

The Coronavirus Combating Bond met with extraordinary demand from investors. The final order book was in excess of RMB 15 billion, more than three times oversubscribed. The bond distribution was well balanced between onshore and offshore investors. The distribution by geography was as follows: China mainland – 41%, Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) – 45%, Asia-Pacific countries (APAC) (excl. China mainland) – 14%. The bond investor distribution by investor type: central banks/official institutions – 54%, banks/bank treasuries – 45%, securities – 1%.

The high-quality final order book, with notable participation from central banks and official institutions, is a testament to the strength of the New Development Bank's credit quality.

"We are pleased with the strong demand, pricing and the overall exceptional result of this RMB Coronavirus Combating Bond in the China Interbank Bond Market. This RMB bond issue is strategically relevant to our mandate of promoting sustainable development and deepens our commitment to raise funding in the local currency of our member countries. The funding from NDB will specifically provide much-needed emergency support during this period of crisis in our member countries, who are all facing new economic challenges and human hardship," said Mr Maasdorp.

Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Limited acted as the lead underwriter and bookrunner. Bank of China Limited, Agricultural Bank of China Limited and China Construction Bank Limited acted as the joint lead underwriters for the bond.

Source: www.ndb.int



Leaders forge their legacies in times of crisis. Here's a look at what some have said about Covid-19



António Guterres
United Nations Secretary-General

"All efforts must be aimed at the common enemy, as we brace for the expected spread of the pandemic in Africa. This is in no way of Africa's making. But, as with the climate crisis, the African continent could end up suffering the greatest impacts."



Dr Zwelini Mkhize
Minister of Health, South Africa

"There can never be a perfect plan in a battle. Ground experience will refine our actions. Academic debates have their place, but during this ground offensive we will entertain advice that refines and improves our effectiveness. The country's future will depend on our swift, coordinated actions."



Dr Maria Van Kerkhove
Epidemiologist and WHO's technical lead for Covid-19

"We are all in this together. Trust in science and know that the world is working hard on a vaccine and treatments. Keep being kind to one another and always find joy in your days."



Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
World Health Organisation Director-General

"Pandemic is not a word to use lightly or carelessly. It is a word that, if misused, can cause unreasonable fear, or unjustified acceptance that the fight is over, leading to unnecessary suffering and death. Describing the situation as a pandemic does not change the WHO's assessment of the threat posed by this virus."

BRICS CCI announces launch of women's wing

The BRICS Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BRICS CCI) has announced the launch of the BRICS CCI Women's Wing with a focus on woman empowerment initiatives and policies across geographies.

The objective of the women's wing is to create an enabling support system for female entrepreneurs and professionals across geographies.

Founded in 2012, BRICS CCI is empanelled with NITI

Aayog and recognised by the United Nations. While the BRICS nations will remain at the centre of all activities, the chamber has taken up its credo to reach out to and enable young entrepreneurs from other friendly nations and bring stakeholders associated with women entrepreneurship across key countries under one platform.

The BRICS CCI Women's Wing will be led by Shabana Nasim, Governing Body Member, BRICS CCI, Shormishtha Ghosh, Director: Business Advisory, BRICS CCI and Ruby Sinha, Convenor, BRICS CCI

Women's Wing and Honorary Advisor BRICS CCI.

A one-stop knowledge hub for women entrepreneurs globally, shetatwork.com will be the knowledge partner for the BRICS CCI Women's Wing. An eminent advisory board comprising eminent female professionals from various countries is also being set up.

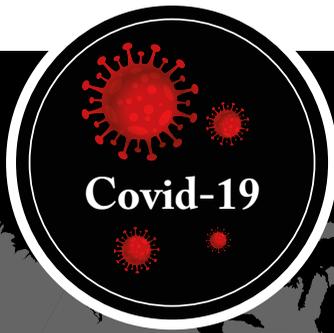
Announcing the launch, Dr B.B.L. Madhukar, Director-General, BRICS CCI, said: "We are very pleased to announce the launch of our exclusive wing for enterprising women entrepreneurs and professionals looking at creating a global presence through our

advisory and support services. It will be our endeavour to create a supportive ecosystem to enable women to realise their full potential, which in turn will help in generating employment and growing the economy."

Source: www.outlookindia.com

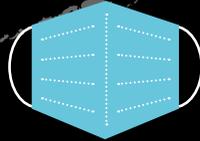


BRICS CCI



Covid-19

Covid-19 FIGURES



SOUTH AFRICA



22 583 Confirmed Cases
11 100 Recoveries
429 Deaths

Tracking the impact on BRICS

W While most cases of the Covid-19 coronavirus have been reported in the United States, Europe and China, the virus is spreading rapidly across the world and other BRICS member countries such as Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa have not been left unscathed.

The confirmed worldwide cases for the virus have surpassed four million with the current figure being at 5 513 975.

The increase in new reported cases around the world has led the World Health Organisation (WHO) to declare the coronavirus a global pandemic.

The death toll has risen globally to a whopping 346 873.



BRAZIL

365 213 Confirmed Cases
149 911 Recoveries
22 746 Deaths





At the time of going to print, all five member states have collectively confirmed 963 445 coronavirus cases and 35 466 deaths.

Stats sourced from www.worldometers.info (25 May 2020)

CRITIQUE

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Coronavirus: How Are BRICS Countries Responding to the Economic Crisis?

THEKISO ANTHONY LEFIFI

T



The response of the five-member BRICS bloc to the outbreak of the novel Covid-19 coronavirus, and its subsequent rapid spread across the globe, has been disjointed. An agreed strategy to contain the virus before it became a pandemic would have been welcome; it might have gone some way in helping each of these nations to stave off the economic malaise and fatalities that have since resulted.

Examples of a co-ordinated strategy

by BRICS could have entailed stopping international travel between member states earlier on and implementing a workable plan to share resources. Instead, the economies of these nation states have been derailed by the virus.

Once the world's fastest-growing economy, China's gross domestic product (GDP) contracted by 6.8% in the first quarter of 2020, according to the country's National Bureau of Statistics. This, as a result of the pandemic.

The negative growth marks China's first annual quarterly decline since 1992 – and the economic decline is expected to continue into the second quarter. Authorities are expected to come up with a stimulus package to boost the economy.

Research by Swiss bank UBS shows that the world's second-largest economy shed approximately 80 million jobs in the first quarter of this year. However, Tao Wang, head of economic research at UBS, estimates that job losses may narrow to less than 50 million by the end of the first half of this year.

Brazil's government, which has downplayed the threat of the pandemic, announced plans in mid-March to inject US\$30 billion into the economy to combat the devastating effects of the coronavirus. Economy Minister Paulo Guedes is optimistic that the South American country will grow by 2.5% this year, despite a growing number of economists forecasting that Brazil will slip into a recession if the country's



A municipal worker wearing full protective gear as a preventive measure against the Covid-19 coronavirus sanitises an area in the Favela of Babilonia, south of the city Rio De Janeiro, Brazil on April 18, 2020.

cumbersome fiscal rules are not relaxed. As things currently stand, Brazil's 2020 primary budget deficit is fast approaching US\$96 billion, or 7% of GDP.

South Africa's economy was already in a technical recession when it got hit by Covid-19, and it is bracing itself for an even deeper recession. Organisations such as Business Unity South Africa have warned that Africa's most advanced economy will sink into a depression. Ratings agency Moody's recently cut South Africa's sovereign credit rating to sub-investment grade, meaning the country now has a "junk status" rating from all three major international ratings agencies. Fitch Ratings also changed its outlook on South Africa, downgrading it to BB from BB+ with a negative outlook. Finance Minister Mr Tito Mboweni and his team find themselves in a race against time. They are engaging with domestic and international financiers, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, to mount a robust financial response that has now been exacerbated by Covid-19.

"Without doubt, given what we know since February, Covid-19 will certainly further deepen the South African downturn woes ... At this stage, our central scenario is for a deep recession in 2020, followed by a rapid upswing in economic growth," said Mr Mboweni.

In an unprecedented move, Lesetja Kganyago, Governor of the South African Reserve Bank, slashed interest rates twice in one month to 4.25%, with the aim of alleviating pressure on consumers and keeping the economy going. The central bank has forecast that GDP will contract by 6.1%, effectively shaving as much as R400 billion from the fiscus.

“Experts believe that had the economic ties between the five BRICS nation been firmer, they would have been better able to mobilise to fight the pandemic.”

Some BRICS member nations have been reluctant to approach Western financial institutions like the IMF because of the stringent conditions that accompany their loans, saying a better option lies in seeking assistance from the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB).

Earlier this month, the NDB said it was ready and willing to lend South Africa US\$1 billion (about R19 billion) – and another US\$1 billion later in the year to further stimulate the economy. The NDB has lent US\$1 billion to China in the form of an Emergency Assistance Program Loan, to help the country tackle Covid-19 through the provision of medical supplies and equipment. For now, Mr Mboweni is mulling over the idea of approaching the bank but hasn't done so, as he dislikes loans.

India has announced a US\$23 billion relief package to help the country's unorganised, informal industry, which employs 94% of the population and contributes 45% to its overall output. Covid-19 is having a devastating effect on the country's already frail economy. Given that India's unemployment rate was already at a 45-year high last year, experts have warned of an even deeper economic crisis. While the IMF has said that India will remain one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, its recent run of economic growth is expected to slow to just 1% this year – the lowest it has been for over 40 years, according to research from the London-

based consultancy Capital Economics.

Experts forecast Russia's economy to drop near zero annual GDP growth while the most conservative economist say the best-case scenario would be a drop to 0.5%. Local economists predicted that the GDP could shrink by up to 9% by the end of 2020. The unemployment rate may reach 10% from 0.7% in 2020 due the Covid-19 pandemic. This means up to 9 million Russians may suddenly find themselves without a source of income.

Experts believe that had the economic ties between the five BRICS nation been firmer, they would have been better able to mobilise to fight the pandemic. The grouping is still viewed as more political than economic.

The IMF has warned the world to brace itself for pedestrian economic growth this year.

Kristalina Georgieva, managing director of the IMF, said the coronavirus pandemic hit the world economy when it was already in a fragile state as it was weighed down by trade disputes, policy uncertainty and geopolitical tensions.

"The global coronavirus outbreak is a crisis that is like no other and poses daunting challenges for policymakers in many emerging market and developing economies (EMDEs), especially where the pandemic encounters weak public health systems, capacity constraints, and limited policy space to mitigate the outbreak's repercussions," Georgieva said. **BR**

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UPFRONT

PROF GERHARD ERASMUS

Covid-19 and the legal measures employed to deal with the crisis



The setting

In this Trade Brief we look at the legal principles that could apply to some of the measures taken by governments to cope with the Covid-19 global health crisis. They range from announcing states of emergency (or “national disasters”) and closing borders, to the stricter regulation of trade in essential medical equipment.

National emergency measures are necessary as first order steps. However, much more needs to be done to deal with the present global disaster. Whether export restrictions serve a useful purpose, is another matter. Certain multilateral law principles may be invoked to justify export restrictions, but they will have detrimental consequences on disaster relief elsewhere. Export restrictions have been designed for “normal” times and are ultimately unsuitable for dealing with the present crisis.

The legal basis of national emergency measures

Governments invoke different types of powers to deal with emergencies and disasters. In the context of the present coronavirus pandemic, US President Donald Trump, for example, invoked emergency powers dormant since the 1950s to force General Motors to speed up the manufacturing of medical ventilators for use in hospitals. India’s central bank cut its benchmark interest rate to 4.4%, its lowest ever.

The best-known example of the cluster of powers typically invoked by governments to deal with emergencies is called a “state of emergency”. This is a situation in which “*a government is empowered to perform actions or impose policies that it would normally not be permitted to undertake. A government can declare such a state during a natural disaster, medical pandemic/epidemic, civil unrest, or armed conflict. Such declarations alert citizens to change their normal behaviour and order government agencies to implement emergency plans.*”

States of emergency can also be used for illegitimate purposes and need to be clearly defined. The abuse of emergency powers for political purposes has been a worldwide phenomenon.

South Africa is a good case study for discussing the norms that should apply to national emergency powers. Under South Africa’s apartheid regime, states of emergency were used to suppress political dissent and as a pretext for suspending individual rights and freedoms. An old Roman Law principle, *salus reipublicae suprema lex* (the welfare of the people is the supreme law), and specific Acts of Parliament were invoked for that purpose. In the former South Africa, parliament was “sovereign” and controlled by the ruling party. There was no supreme constitution then to control “emergency” powers.

This is no longer the case. The South African Constitution of 1996 provides, firstly, that the Constitution is the supreme law of the land, that law or conduct inconsistent with it is invalid, and that all constitutional obligations must be fulfilled. It provides for a detailed Bill of Rights and contains carefully drafted provisions on when and how basic freedoms may be limited and when a state of emergency may be declared. It does not provide for a separate category called martial law, which traditionally involves the imposition of military control over civilian life.

In South Africa a state of emergency may be declared only in terms of an Act of Parliament, and only when “*the life of the nation is threatened by war, invasion, general insurrection, disorder, natural disaster or other public emergency; and the declaration is necessary to restore peace and order.*” Any competent court may decide on the validity of a declaration of a state of emergency; any extension thereof, or any legislation enacted, or other action taken, in consequence of a declaration of a state of emergency.

The State of Emergency Act, 1997 governs the declaration of a state of emergency by the President of South Africa. The President has the power to make emergency regulations “necessary or expedient” to restore peace and order and end the emergency. There are also other laws which can be used in difficult times, such as the Disaster Management Act 57 of 2002.

On 15 March 2020, South African Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma declared a *National State of Disaster* in Government Gazette 43096, citing the “magnitude and severity of the Covid-19 outbreak which has been declared a global pandemic...”. On the same day, in an address to the nation, President Cyril



The Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, briefs the media on the details of government interventions in various sectors of the departmental portfolios on Covid-19 at DIRCO Media Centre on March 16, 2020 in Pretoria, South Africa.

Ramaphosa announced the declared national disaster following a special Cabinet meeting.

The recent measures announced as the government’s response to Covid-19 have been promulgated in terms of the Disaster Management Act 57 of 2002. This Act provides for a National Disaster Management Centre, and an integrated and coordinated disaster management system, including national, provincial and municipal disaster management centres and volunteers. The objective is to “promote an integrated and coordinated system of disaster management”, with special emphasis on prevention and mitigation. When

“ National emergency measures are necessary as first order steps. However, much more needs to be done to deal with the present global disaster. ”

a disastrous event occurs or threatens to occur, the National Centre must assess the magnitude and severity of the situation and determine whether a disaster exists in terms of this Act. It must classify the disaster as a local, provincial or national disaster and resources must be made available. Specific measures are issued to deal with the disaster at hand and to avoid the escalation of the national State of Disaster to a State of Emergency. National disasters have been declared

before in South Africa.

A state of national disaster lasts for three months, if not extended or cancelled. Section 27(5) of the Disaster Management Act provides that a national state of disaster lapses three months after it has been declared. It may also be terminated by the minister before it lapses and may be extended for one month at a time before it lapses.

Detailed *Disaster Management Act Regulations* have been promulgated to curb the spread of Covid-19 in

South Africa. The lockdown measures announced as part of the national state of disaster continue, with detrimental consequences for Southern African regional trade and commerce. Several regional border posts have been closed. All international and domestic flights are prohibited, irrespective of the risk category of the country of origin. Only essential air cargo is allowed. All cross-border road passenger movements will be prohibited for the duration of the lockdown. However, cross-border freight movement for essential goods will continue to and from our neighbouring countries. On 17 March 2020, the Republic of Namibia also declared a state of emergency.

Provisions in international trade agreements

These are not normal times. A discussion of legal instruments which could potentially be invoked to restrict the exportation of essential medical equipment (there is no vaccine for Covid-19 yet) should be seen in this light. The present restrictions on the exportation of medical equipment (such as ventilators) used for treating patients affected by the coronavirus, to the extent that they do apply, suggest desperate local measures in order to be able to cope with urgent conditions in national hospitals, not a calculated trade policy. The EU has, for example, taken steps to limit the exportation of medical equipment outside its membership and has justified this measure as necessary *“to protect our health workers, who are in the first line of defence, against the virus”*.

What follows below is a general sketch of legal provisions in trade agreements potentially relevant to the issues examined here. It is not suggested that formal disputes should be considered or will be declared. This pandemic is a global one. Individual state measures (even if they are compatible with exception clauses in international trade agreements) are not adequate and cannot provide the necessary answers.

International trade and economic integration agreements provide for



A view of a deserted Sandton City during the coronavirus lockdown imposed in South Africa.

obligations to ensure that the State Parties to such agreements guarantee the free movement of goods, services, capital and labour across national borders. The deeper the integration, the more detailed the obligations of the Member States.

These agreements also provide for exceptions. When a State Party or Member of an organisation regulating trade among nations faces an “emergency”, or when certain actions are permitted under specific circumstances, the government in question should be able to impose the necessary measures. Exception clauses strike a balance between legitimate needs and the danger of abusing exceptions for protectionist

reasons. In rules-based trade arrangements, measures taken under exception clauses are, as a consequence, justiciable. It is possible for affected State Parties to invoke the relevant dispute settlement mechanism to ensure that the applicable norms are complied with. There have been several WTO cases to this effect.

The classical exception clause is Article XX of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The relevant part provides: *“Subject to the requirement that such measures are not applied in a manner which would constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination between countries where the same conditions prevail, or a disguised restriction on international trade, nothing in this Agreement shall be construed to prevent the adoption or enforcement by any Member of measures necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health.”*



The measure taken must be publicly announced and should be published in the relevant official gazette.

Most WTO cases involving the interpretation of Article XX are about import restrictions, but Article XX measures can also provide for export restrictions. If a Member State would want to restrict exports and can show that the exportation of medical equipment is necessary in order to cope with a health crisis, such restrictions could fall under this exception. WTO cases confirm that it is within the authority of a WTO Member to identify the public health objectives it seeks to achieve, as well as the level of protection that it wants to obtain, through the policy it chooses to adopt. However, Members are bound to implement these objectives through measures consistent with the requirements in Article XX.

The exceptional measures for which Article XX is invoked, must also be “necessary” to fulfil the policy objective. The meaning of the word “necessary” has been clarified in case law and refers to a range of considerations. The term necessary is not limited to what is “indispensable” or “of absolute necessity” or “inevitable”. It involves a process

Index: “The Panel recalled that previous panels had established that Article XX is a limited and conditional exception from obligations under other provisions of the General Agreement, and not a positive rule establishing obligations in itself. Therefore, the practice of panels has been to interpret Article XX narrowly, to place the burden on the party invoking Article XX to justify its invocation, and not to examine Article XX exceptions unless invoked.”

The restrictions imposed in order to cope with Covid-19 include measures affecting inter alia tourism and the hospitality industries, as well as the cross-border movement of natural persons. Different modes of trade in services are thus affected. The General Agreement on Trade in Services (the “GATS”) also has a General Exceptions clause stating that Member States can impose measures “necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health”.

WTO Member States may (under the GATS) also take actions considered “necessary for the protection of its essential security interests: ... taken in time of war or other emergency in international relations ...”. Article XXI GATT is the equivalent GATT provision dealing with national security and provides: “Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed... to prevent any contracting party from taking any action which it considers necessary for the protection of its essential security interests... taken in time of war or other emergency in international relations...”.

The first requirement for invoking Article 18(2) of the SACU Agreement flows from the text itself: the domestic health measure and the export restriction must be based on national laws and regulations for the protection of health of humans. The necessity requirement, though not explicitly stated, seems to be implied: the permitted national laws and regulations are only those adopted for the protection of health of humans.

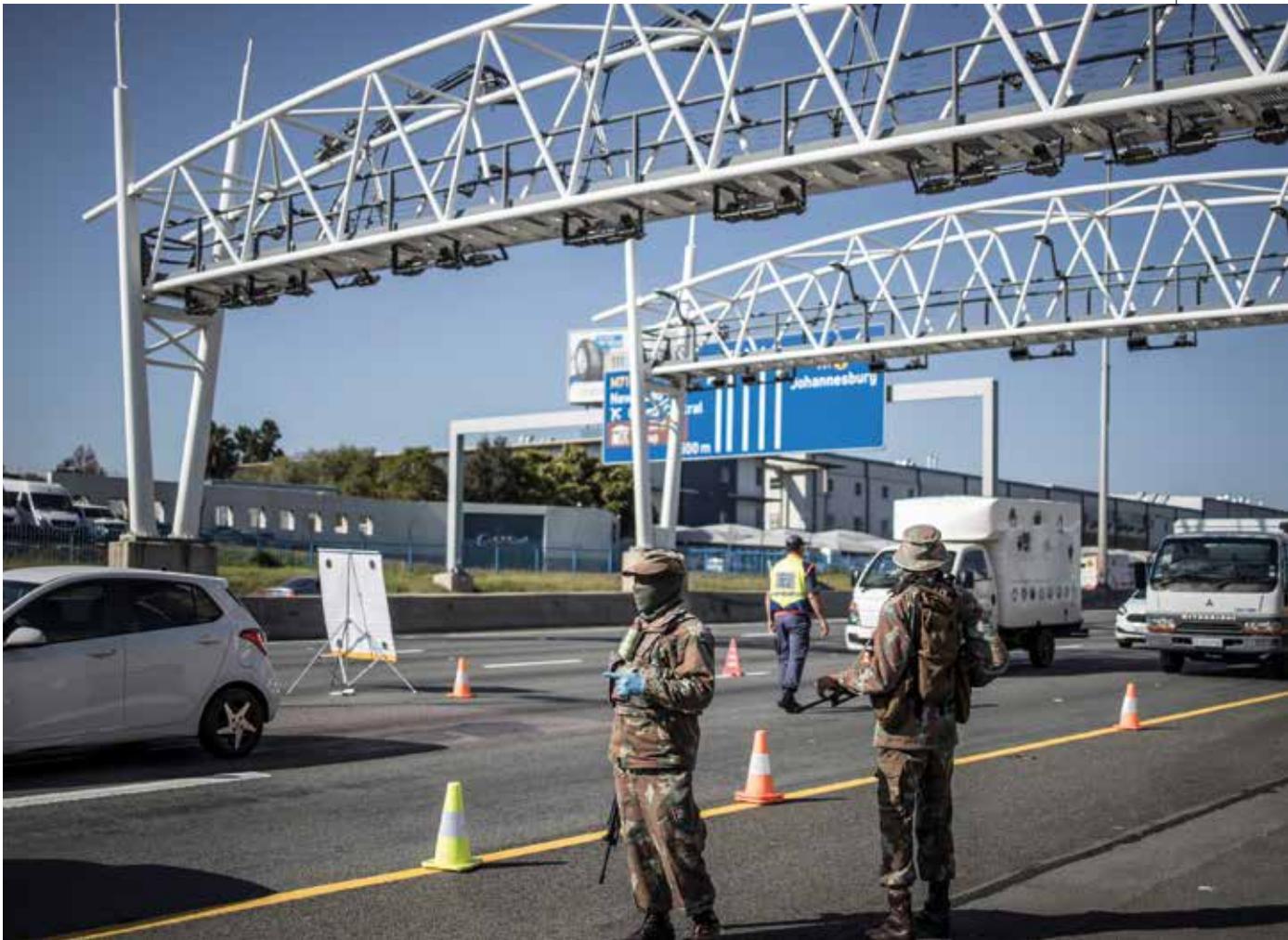
It is not very likely that Article 18 of the SACU Agreement will generate disputes around the present pandemic. South Africa has not banned the exportation of medicines or medical equipment in neighbouring countries, SACU is a well-integrated commercial

“States of emergency can also be used for illegitimate purposes and need to be clearly defined. The abuse of emergency powers for political purposes has been a worldwide phenomenon.”

The requirements in the preamble (chapeau) to this Article prohibit arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination (restrictive measures must be general, not exclusive), or a disguised restriction on international trade. Of the latter it has been observed that it is “the application of the measure and not the measure itself that needed to be examined”.

of weighing and balancing a series of factors, but ultimately an exception is strictly interpreted.

The onus will be on the State invoking the exception in Article XX to show that its export restriction is necessary in order to deal with the health threat at hand. As recalled in the discussion or Article XX GATT in the *Analytical*



South African soldiers are seen at a checkpoint managed by the South African Police Service on the N1 highway in Johannesburg, on 24 April 2020, as part of measures taken to fight the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus.

space, with South African retailers and service providers operating all over the SACU Common Customs Area, and the neighbouring populations are small compared to South Africa's.

SACU does not have an operational tribunal, but the SACU Member States are all WTO members. Disputes about impermissible export bans could presumably be filed under WTO rules but this is extremely unlikely. The SACU Member States have never done so before; there is no culture of formally

declaring inter-state disputes involving trade agreements.

Private parties would be entitled (if they have the necessary standing) to apply to domestic courts to review export restrictions on constitutional grounds, such as the right to equal treatment and even the right to life. Administrative law requirements (rationality and natural justice rules) will also be relevant in such applications. It is unlikely that the measures recently announced in South Africa would be susceptible to constitutional challenge. They appear to be fully compliant with the national constitutions. The enforcers of these measures (including the police and the military) should obviously act within the parameters of the law.

Article 9 of the SADC Protocol on

Trade is SADC's General Exceptions clause. It is, for all practical purposes, a repetition of Article XX GATT. This Protocol also contains a Security Exception and a provision on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. Article 5 deals with the elimination of export duties. Member States shall not apply any export duties on goods for export to other Member States.

However, this Article "*shall not prevent any Member State from applying export duties necessary to prevent erosion of any prohibitions or restrictions, which apply to exports outside the Community, provided that no less favourable treatment is granted to Member States than to third countries*".

The Protocol on Trade in Goods of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which is in force but not yet operational, contains a

Security Exception clause, a provision on balance of payments and one on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. The latter refers to the relevant Annex, which provides, in Article 3 thereof: “*In the preparation, adoption, and application of SPS measures, State Parties shall be guided by the provisions of the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.*”

Article 26 of the AfCFTA Protocol on Trade in Goods deals with General Exceptions. It repeats the preamble and basic elements of Article XX GATT. It does, however, add two additional exceptions. The State Parties may take measures “*involving restrictions on exports of domestic materials necessary to ensure essential quantities of such materials*

and a lack of scientific evidence about the nature and infection features of the disease. This causes panic. However, public health officials, including the World Health Organisation, and trade experts have warned that hoarding could prevent supplies from reaching the most-needed areas and reduce incentives for companies to ramp up production. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO director-general, has said that governments should ease restrictions on the export and distribution of medical supplies. “This is a question of solidarity. This cannot be solved by WHO alone, or one industry alone,” he said. “It requires all of us working together to ensure all countries can protect the people who protect the

Measures such as physical distancing and lockdowns are not practical in societies where informal trade keeps people alive and where thousands live in crowded spaces. Only a few can work from home.

What began as a health crisis, is now also a global economic crisis. People and businesses around the world are affected. The slowdown in major economies will see global demand fall. There will be a decline in commodity prices, with oil exporters directly affected. Developing nations are bound to be affected in a major way.

Conclusion: This pandemic is different

Crises do not last forever, but they can have lasting consequences. These depend, in the case of Covid-19, on what lessons are learned (and how fast) and how individual governments and the international community respond. One obvious lesson is that although the initial responsibility to protect the health of the nation lies with the government in question, international cooperation is vital to secure longer-term safety. Another lesson is about the need for a new discourse and different policies. Deadly viruses (and climate change) do not respect national sovereignty or border controls.

A health crisis of the Covid-19 proportions is sui generis because it is a global crisis. It cannot be tackled by invoking standard exception clauses and through unilateral state measures.

National governments need the necessary powers and the means to deal with sudden emergencies. These powers should be adequate and be exercised in a rational and non-arbitrary manner. Reliable information and scientific evidence (still lacking in this instance) are necessary to design the measures required to deal with disasters such as Covid-19. However, effective domestic policies (such as those developed to deal with the Ebola crisis of a few years ago) and specific global emergency assistance measures should now be the priority. Good governance now becomes appropriate global governance. **BR**

“The present crisis is exacerbated by the scarcity of essential medical equipment and a lack of scientific evidence about the nature and infection features of the disease. This causes panic.”

to a domestic processing industry during periods when the domestic price of such materials is held below the world price as part of a governmental stabilisation plan”.

The State Parties may also invoke this provision when “*essential to the acquisition or distribution of foodstuffs or any other products in general or local short supply, provided that any such measures shall be consistent with the principle that all State Parties are entitled to an equitable share of the international supply of such products, and that any such measures, which are inconsistent with the other provisions of the Protocol shall be discontinued as soon as the conditions giving rise to them have ceased to exist*”.

Policy measures

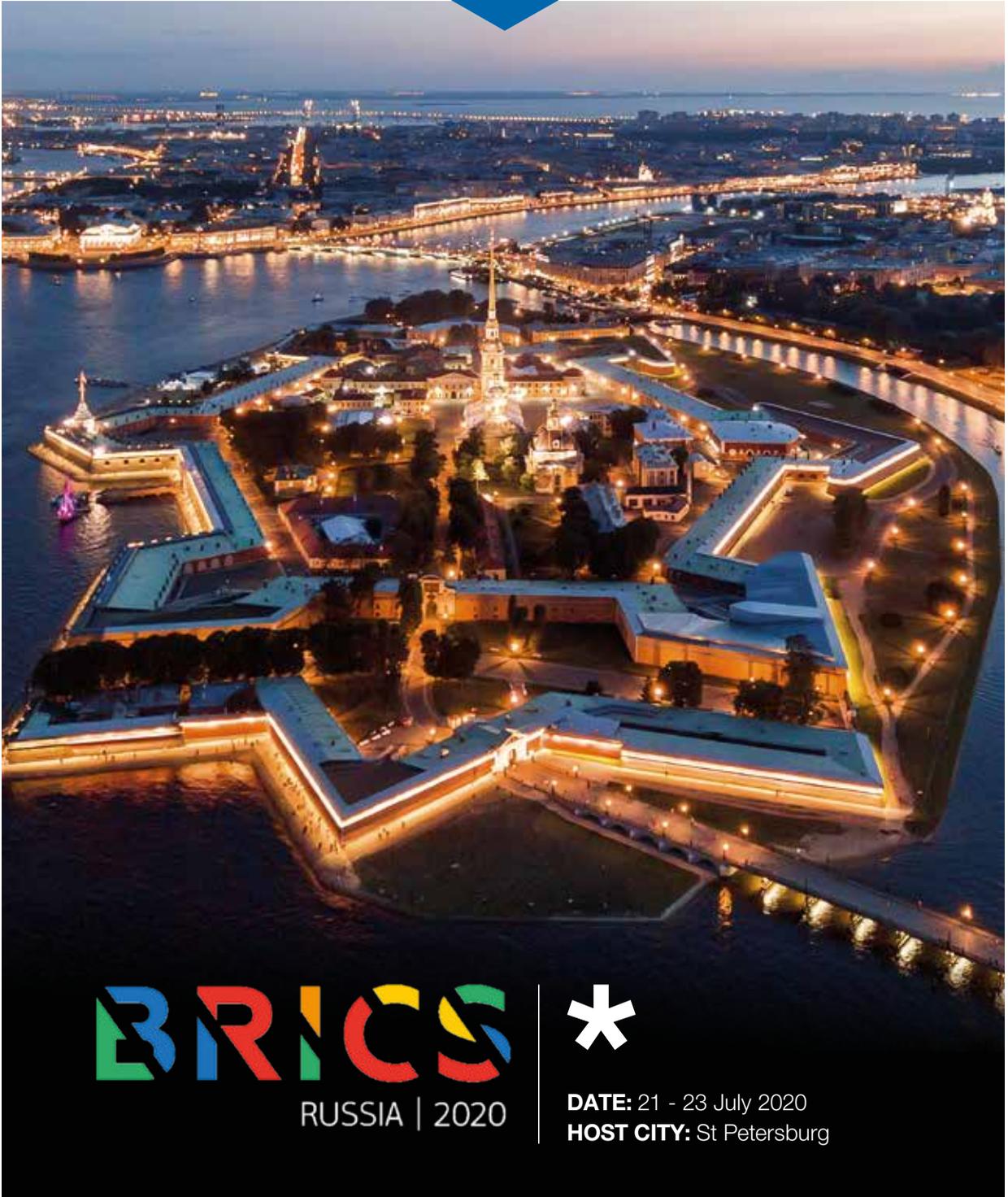
The present crisis is exacerbated by the scarcity of essential medical equipment

rest of us.” Previous campaigns (against malaria and HIV/Aids) have shown that it takes a coordinated global effort to roll back a global scourge.

There will hopefully be humanitarian assistance on an adequate scale when this virus hits Africa in full force. However, the necessary measures should be adopted as a matter of urgency. It has been observed that it is already “*too late to avoid a large number of deaths, but not too late to avert catastrophe. And it is in rich countries’ interests to think globally as well as locally. If Covid-19 is left to ravage the emerging world, it will soon spread back to the rich one.*”

International cooperation is necessary in order to ensure that poor countries in particular survive the present crisis. Their healthcare systems cannot cope.

AGENDA



BRICS

RUSSIA | 2020



DATE: 21 - 23 July 2020

HOST CITY: St Petersburg

Priorities of the Russian BRICS chairship in 2020

1. Strengthening multilateral principles in global politics and promoting shared interests of the BRICS countries in international fora:

- to promote the unifying agenda based on the universally recognised principles and norms of the international law and the interests of all states;
- to promote the central role of the United Nations in international relations;
- to consolidate collective efforts to respond to global and regional challenges and threats;
- to deepen cooperation between the BRICS countries in countering terrorism, extremism, corruption, cross-border crime and illicit drug and arms trafficking;
- to strengthen collaboration in space exploration and peaceful use of outer space;
- to continue the dialogue on the security in the use of ICTs and countering cybercrime;
- to enhance BRICS countries' coordination mechanisms in key international fora;
- to develop cooperation with partner countries in the "BRICS Plus" and "Outreach" dialogue formats;
- to enhance dialogue on the issues of international development cooperation.

2. Developing cooperation in trade, economy and finance:

- to renew the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership;
- to facilitate trade and investments between the BRICS countries;
- to promote the potential of the New Development Bank;
- to enhance the BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement mechanisms;
- to develop and integrate BRICS national payment systems;
- to launch practical activities of BRICS Women's Business Alliance;
- to promote the economic development of the remote areas within BRICS;
- to strengthen cooperation among the BRICS tax, customs and anti-monopoly line agencies;
- to promote cooperation in the field of energy;
- to develop cooperation in the digital economy and innovations;

- to strengthen ties in healthcare, including by taking joint measures in fighting infectious and non-infectious diseases;
- to encourage dialogue among the five countries on agriculture and food security;
- to strengthen contacts in the field of prevention and elimination of consequences of emergencies and natural disasters.

3. Cooperation in the cultural and humanitarian spheres and strengthening people-to-people contacts:

- to develop interparliamentary cooperation;
- to promote cultural cooperation;
- to enhance cooperation in the field of education;
- to further develop BRICS Network University activities;
- to strengthen youth contacts;
- to deepen cooperation in sports and hold BRICS Games;
- to promote cooperation within public diplomacy formats;
- to develop contacts among representatives of the BRICS journalism community.



ANNOUNCEMENT:

Due to the measures taken by the Coordination Council of the Russian Government to control the incidence of the coronavirus infection in the Russian Federation, as well as due to the restrictions on official trips abroad imposed by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and several BRICS countries, it was decided to postpone the SCO and BRICS events planned for March and April 2020. This decision was made at the interdepartmental meeting on holding events of Russia's Presidency of the SCO in 2019–2020 and the Russian BRICS chairship in 2020.

“The Russian Federation is taking all the necessary measures to protect the health of its citizens and foreign visitors staying in the country,” said Anton Kobyakov, Adviser to the Russian President and Executive Secretary of the Organising Committee for Russia's Presidency of the (SCO) in 2019–2020 and the Russian BRICS chairship in 2020. “We maintain constant working contacts with the Government Coordination Council. I am confident that our joint efforts will ensure the successful implementation of all the tasks outlined in the framework of Russia's Presidency of the SCO in 2019–2020 and the Russian BRICS chairship in 2020. As for the postponed events, their new dates will be determined by the Organising Committee on the proposals of the relevant Russian Line agencies with due regard for the development of the sanitary and epidemiological situation in the world. At the same time, I would like to note that some events planned for March and April will be conducted in a new format of video conference.” **BR**

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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BRAZIL



DANILO MATOSO MACEDO AND SYLVIA FICHER

Brasilia: Preservation of a Modernist City



In 1956, Brazilian president Juscelino Kubitschek committed his government to the erection of a new federal capital in the country's remote interior, to be inaugurated before the end of his term of office. This constituted a major step toward achieving a two-centuries-old dream of spreading the country's population into the hinterland of Brazil. Through a national competition held the following year, an international jury selected the entry by Lucio Costa (1902 – 1998) for the urban design of the new city – the so-called Pilot

Plan (*Plano Piloto*) of Brasilia.

A crucial feature of Costa's proposal was a sharp distinction between an administrative *civitas* of monumental character and the everyday *urbs*. On a monumental axis running east to west and lined by a sequence of public buildings, the Esplanade of Ministries abuts the capital's foremost civic space, the Three Power Plaza. Brasilia's residential quarters – which were meant for 500 000 inhabitants and included commerce, services, and educational





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1. Brasilia, the planned city that became Brazil's capital in 1960, photographed on 1 November 1968.

2. Portrait of Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer (1907 – 2012) as he stands in the Palacio da Alvorada.

3. Night-time view of the Palacio da Alvorada and its reflecting pool, which highlights a bronze sculpture by Alfredo Ceschiatti.

4. The Attorney General and Federal Prosecution Office.

“Brasilia's completion in three and a half years was praised as an epic feat of self-determination by the Brazilian people.”

and health facilities – were conceived in terms of neighbourhood units and modulated in superblocks along an arched north-south freeway.

This division of the urban fabric between the civic space and the residential areas was highly deliberate. It was intended to make possible the speedy completion of the most prominent civic structures to create an emblematic vision of the nation's new capital. The strategy was effective. For the *civitas*, world-renowned architect Oscar Niemeyer (1907 – 2012) and his team designed the executive, legislative, and judiciary palaces, Brasilia's celebrated icons. The most essential bureaucracy was accommodated without delay, and the population of the Federal District quickly jumped to about

150 000 inhabitants after the inauguration in April 1960.

Brasilia today

Half a century later, Brasilia is the fourth-largest metropolis in the country and the home of more than two and a half million citizens. Yet fewer than 10% are residents of the Pilot Plan area. While the original nucleus accommodates chiefly the upper middle classes, by far the greater portion of the population, covering a wider social range, lives in the 27 satellite towns that now exist in the Federal District. Most of these are merged into one extensive multi-centred conurbation sprawling from the Pilot Plan toward the southwest, connected by a few expressways. With the exception of some neighbourhoods



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5. Brazil's Bicameral National Congress is part of the city's main monuments. The semi-sphere on the left represents the Senate, and the semi-sphere on the right is the Chamber of the Deputies.

6. Federal Senate Plenary Chamber at Brazilian National Congress

7. The Itamaraty Palace (headquarters of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil).

8. Aerial view of the Cathedral in Brasilia

9. Inside of Brasilia Cathedral by architect Oscar Niemeyer.



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teeming with high-rise apartment buildings, dispersion, low densities, and extensive empty lands are the rule. An insufficient mass transportation system, segregation, and neglected public spaces – problems not unusual in metropolitan areas – are much amplified in Brasilia by misguided urban policies.

Some of these shortcomings, such as road specialisation and monofunctional zoning, were part and parcel of the Modern Movement ideals, which shaped the urban planning agenda of the 1950s. As a consequence, they are inherent traits of the Pilot Plan and its offspring, the satellite towns, and today they are in urgent need of revision.



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Legal measures

Brasilia was built at a moment when the modernist agenda was under scrutiny; its principles were severely attacked by critics such as Bruno Zevi and Sibyl Moholy-Nagy even before its inauguration. On the other hand, Brasilia's completion in three and a half years was praised as an epic feat of self-determination by the Brazilian people, as reported by architectural historian Norma Evenson. Brasilia became a monument to its own building, and Oscar Niemeyer's palaces turned into new symbols of the nation. Albeit more conceptually, Lucio Costa never ceased to defend his work. In 1961, in answer to criticisms about the Pilot



“Oscar Niemeyer’s palaces turned into new symbols of the nation. Albeit more conceptually, Lucio Costa never ceased to defend his work.”

Plan’s lack of human scale, Costa argued that its qualities should be gauged while considering three different configurations: a *monumental* scale, a *gregarious* scale, and a *residential* scale. Thirteen years later, he added a fourth category: a *bucolic* scale.

In the early 1980s, an inter-institutional group of architects – from local government, the national monuments agency, and the university – made some efforts to assure systematic procedures for protection not only of the Pilot Plan but

also of other areas of historical interest in the Federal District. However, it was Costa’s report, *Brasilia Revisited*, reinforcing the four scales as a leitmotif for preservation, that defined the parameters for the listing of the city as established in a short local statute in 1987. Although the four scales were initially intended to demonstrate that Brasilia was just a town like any other, they were paradoxically characterised as defining its uniqueness. Somehow it came to be presumed that

the way the scales mix with one another determines the character to be maintained in different sectors.

This local statute was, in fact, meant to address UNESCO’s legal requirements for the candidacy of Brasilia as a World Heritage Site, a title that was awarded in December 1987, thus making the Pilot Plan one of the first modernist sites on that list. As the ensemble was still incomplete, the International Council of Monuments and Sites recommended that



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10. The National Stadium (Estádio Nacional Mané Garrincha) in Brasília.

11. Brasília museum by Oscar Niemeyer.

12. Juscelino Kubitschek Bridge designed by architect Alexandre Chan.

additional legislation should be passed to “ensure the preservation of the urban creation of Costa and Niemeyer.” Hence, a federal statute was issued in 1992 that enforces the same parameters as the local statute, founded not on a realistic appraisal of the actual city, but on its original design and Costa’s four-scale justification. Leading to dire consequences, the federal statute consented to proposals for new buildings by the architects of Brasília, Costa and Niemeyer, as necessary complements to the original Pilot Plan.

Although the federal government obviously has a prominent presence in Brasília, there is a lack of consistent guidelines for the maintenance of

federal buildings and for expansion of the city. Moreover, urban policies and management are left entirely to the Federal District administration, which functions as an independent state with local political interests.

Preservation now

With respect to preservation in Brasília, few buildings are listed individually, and regulatory protection remains vague, without detailed guidelines for current conservation. Combined with the problems that stem from administrative disarray, a pervading admiration for the work of Costa and Niemeyer and a reverence for their original designs

constantly impede commonsense solutions to the city’s problems. In the name of heritage, grave mistakes in planning – such as high-speed freeways that crisscross the urban fabric dangerously – are defended by preservationists, while massive low-quality housing projects are built at great distances from the city centre, for the sake of maintaining an unsullied image of the Pilot Plan.

Niemeyer took full advantage of the provision that allowed him to design freely the “necessary complements” to the original Pilot Plan. As a result, the last 25 years were witness to a series of his interventions, each clearly undertaken as a new enterprise without reference to the



“Above and beyond its illustrious core, it is a dynamic and pulsating city.”

existing context. One extreme instance was the 2009 proposal (never built) that included a 100-metre obelisk in the middle of the Esplanade of Ministries, which fortunately received a negative public response.

With such a dearth of viable directives, real estate interests and gentrification, along with the genuine awareness in the population of its importance, have somehow successfully preserved the Pilot Plan's unique traits, especially its green spaces.

The Pilot Plan's representative ensemble and the functional mix in the residential neighbourhood units are innovative and successful experiments. Nevertheless, much of their small-scale detailing remains to be implemented, or at least improved; walkways, parking lots, street furniture, and other elements essential to urban life should be carefully designed.

Public debate and new proposals, preferably generated by competitions, are also needed to address the monofunctional areas in the centre of the city, to rehabilitate areas such as the consolidated Commercial Sector and complete other areas, such as the vacant Hotels Sector.

As the main presence in the country's capital, the federal administration should keep control of its assets and suitably plan for the physical growth of its institutions. A specific agency to deal with these issues should be established. A consistent conservation management plan, with policy guidance that could facilitate and manage change in the future, is imperative and could be a highly useful tool to promote decision-making, overcoming personalistic, ad hoc solutions. As with other World Heritage Sites, such a plan would become an official document

that guides governmental agencies and local governing bodies. It would define context and balance cultural and social significance with appropriate policies, providing a road map for the preservation of the capital complex and setting. It would help establish a proper relationship between the Pilot Plan area and its surrounding metropolitan areas, recognising that they are dependent on each other and should be planned as a single entity.

Brasilia is a showcase of the challenges faced when dealing with the modern city.

It is hindered by imprecise definitions of cultural heritage values and an obsession with its founding fathers, instead of taking into account today's material and social realities. Above and beyond its illustrious core, it is a dynamic and pulsating city. Its true qualities are still to be thoroughly assessed, as much as its many failures, old and new, must be faced and overcome. In other words, Brasilia is not just a *civitas*; preservationist consciousness must also embrace its greater context, including its *urbs*. **BR**

Source: www.getty.edu

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FEATURE

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Shubha Chacko has been closely linked to grassroots level groups working on these issues. Her work experience over three decades has been varied, but within the realm of development, human rights and social justice.



Women carry water bottles while crossing an open field near the synthetic fuel plant in Secunda, on 26 August 2015.

PRITI DAROOKA AND SHUBHA CHACKO

Intertwined: Women and Water – Towards a policy at the New Development Bank



Water is a human lifeline. Water has also been recognised as a human right. The right to water includes rights to receive safe, affordable and clean, accessible water and sanitation services. It is a critical natural resource which underpins all social and economic activities by sustaining livelihoods, and is seen

as the basis for social and economic development, including the achievement of many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Conversely, water insecurity presents an immense hindrance to poverty reduction and sustainable development in the coming decades.

One third of the world's population

is currently experiencing some kind of physical or economic water scarcity. A growing competition for water from different sectors, including industry, agriculture, power generation, domestic use and the environment, is making it difficult for poor people to access this scarce resource for productive, consumptive and social uses. This particularly affects poor rural people, especially women. Managing disparities in access and availability of water effectively and fairly constitutes one of the great imperatives of governance and water resource management. Everyone, including the private sector, agrees in principle with people's needs and claims for adequate water. However, making this a reality for all continues to be a challenge. The decline in water security has started to attract the attention of the global community, with cities like Cape Town running out of water. Security of water has been described as "the availability of an acceptable quantity and quality of water for health, livelihoods, ecosystems and production, coupled with an acceptable level of water-related risks to people, environments and economies". In recent years, several countries have made investments in large-scale water infrastructure. India, for example, has made a commitment to build, repair and maintain water infrastructures, prioritising water-scarce areas such as the desert state of Rajasthan. Moreover, globally, ideas around water management have changed: While initial policies concentrated on planning and designing for the physical provision of water, the emphasis has shifted to a more integrated water resource management (IWRM) system which factors in a coordinated management process that includes land and water. It also includes socio-economic gains that would accrue from projects, as well as concerns of equity and sustainability. IWRM key principles also recognise that women have a central role to play in the provision, management and safeguarding of water.



An elderly woman from Nongoma, north-west of Durban, collects water from a free water point

Several international financial institutions (IFIs), including the New Development Bank (NDB), have prioritised funding large infrastructure projects and have identified water as a key component of their strategy. The scarcity of water, like that of any other resource, poses the inevitable questions: who gets how much and at what cost? But there are deeper questions that also need to be addressed: Who decides and how? This policy brief is developed from work done by the programme on Women's Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (PWESCR) in gender monitoring of the NDB-funded water resource management project in Rajasthan, India – Rajasthan Water Sector Restructuring Project for Desert Areas (RWSRPD). A gender analysis of NDB policy documents, including Economic Social Framework (ESF), and of RWSRPD project documents and key observations from field visits to Rajasthan's project sites, have provided valuable insights.

Women and water

Within the international development arena the need to improve the

“A growing competition for water from different sectors is making it difficult for poor people to access this scarce resource, especially women.”

management of water resources – including health concerns around quality of water, the damage caused by water-related disasters, the effects of water on economic performance and concerns about protecting water-dependent environments – has been receiving substantial attention. The role of women in this has also begun to be acknowledged and factored into programmes. The importance of involving both women and men in the management of water and sanitation has been recognised at the global level. One of the first mentions was way back in 1977 at the United Nations Water Conference at

Mar del Plata; this was followed by the International Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade (1981-90). It was at the International Conference on Water and the Environment in Dublin (January 1992) that the role of women in the provision, management and safeguarding of water was unequivocally recognised. Agenda 21, which emerged from the Rio Conference and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, also referred to the role of women. The International Decade for Action 'Water for Life' (2005-2015, which overlapped with the timeframe set to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, or MDGs) clearly underlined



An Indian woman carries a bucket of water on her head on a smog-covered morning as she walks back to where she and other members of her family have a small shack in Noida, a satellite city of India's capital.

“Most of the world's 1.2 billion poor people, two thirds of whom are women, live in water-scarce countries and do not have access to safe and reliable supplies of water for productive and domestic use.”

the need for women's participation and involvement in water-related development efforts. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is expected to strongly influence future policies and strategies, and to ensure that water pollution control comes higher on the list of international and national priorities. Agenda 2030 and the SDGs offer unique guidance both on women's empowerment (SDG5) and the importance of “water and sanitation” (SDG 6) and the connection between the two. Recent reports – including the one by the High Level Panel on Water (HLPW), the UN Water synthesis report, and the UN Women and Global Water Partnership Action Piece all – make this link between

women's equality and water issues. Many international and national policy statements have included the component of supporting the “mainstreaming of gender” in the water sector. Gender-defined roles around water are premised on the divide between the public and the “private”; activities focused on the formal economy and those that are not. Women are seen as the ‘natural’ collectors of water for household use, and disposers of waste water where sanitation is inadequate. Girl children are often pulled out of school to help with carrying water. Women stand in long lines, walk long distances, or pay exorbitant amounts to secure water. Lack of easy access to clean potable water affects

women and their families' health. Water scarcity directly impacts the time spent by women to fetch water and prevents them from engaging in paid work and other productive activities. Therefore, women as water managers will always prioritise water for domestic and other uses besides irrigation. A gender analysis of investments by IFIs in water and sanitation in Haiti revealed that it did little to change gendered responsibilities around procuring water for domestic use, or around the subsequent caring for household members rendered sick from dysentery and cholera caused by poor sanitation. The link between poor sanitation and higher maternal mortality rates was also uncovered in this research. Water as a productive resource also supports livelihoods for women, especially for rural women. This includes farming, livestock-raising, gardening, food processing, and small enterprises. Women are generally involved in rain-fed agriculture and small backyard/kitchen gardens. In many countries, women are the main producers of staple foods. They work on their family farms and also as paid workers on others' farms. Men, however, are seen managing land and water commodities – storage tanks, pumps etc. Women's and girls' requirements from a

water programme – whether for sanitation and hygiene, domestic consumption or for sustenance and livelihood activities – are often different from men's. Women and men may also have different water use priorities. For example, men prefer to use water for cash crops and livestock, whereas women prioritise water for staple crops, vegetables, and domestic use. Gender roles are also defined by local migration patterns and production cycles. Male migration to urban areas leaves women to be responsible for agriculture. Without taking into account the diverse needs and practices of a community, it may not be possible to reduce existing inequalities, enhance cost–benefit ratios, and actually deliver the intended and sustainable food security for all. Most water projects prior to IWRM focused on a single dimension – domestic supply or water for irrigation. Recognition of women as key water user, provider and conserver has brought a multi-use approach (for agriculture, fishing, livestock, small enterprises, etc) to IWRM. Providing water for multi-use has reduced drudgery for women and provided them time to engage in other productive livelihood activities. Studies demonstrate that the single use approach to water supply does result in women's lower participation in decision-making processes. Due to their gendered role, women also may have different preferences for operating irrigation systems. For example, they tend to desist from suggesting a night-time schedule of water delivery because they fear for their safety. After years of critique of poorly performing irrigation systems, the decision to involve water users in the management of irrigation schemes was adopted and Water User Associations (WUAs) were created globally. WUAs certainly reduced government expenditure and gave the responsibility of maintenance and operation to water users on the ground. It did increase ownership and participation of local farmers through democratic processes, and improved governance of water management with increased accountability. However, WUAs only accepted landowners as members and hence excluded women and landless people. WUAs very much reflect existing local social, economic and political power structures which continue to play a role

in the distribution of resources including water. For the most part WUAs represent the elite, affluent and powerful men of the communities. In most countries in the South, access to productive resources, including water, is intrinsically linked to access to land or land ownership. Although women work closely on the land, women globally are not landowners, and therefore do not access credit or gain membership to agricultural groups or WUAs, which leaves them out of decision-making processes that decide site selection, beneficiaries, land allocation or water delivery systems.

Planning meetings of WUA become the start of a long inclusion and exclusion process that does result in economic and social benefits. There are also examples where several development projects for irrigation have had a negative impact on women. Women, for example, may gain access to water through these projects but lose their control over the resources. The establishment of a WUA with all-male membership in Rajasthan to manage the Indira Gandhi Canal distributaries and sub-distributaries has alienated women from water resource management and can make them totally dependent on men (husbands) for water. This is not empowerment.

Staff and officials of government irrigation departments often have an inadequate understanding of gender and no will to promote women's participation.

For both men and women to play an active role in WUAs, these associations need to recognise multi uses of water other than for irrigation. Proactive steps, including affirmative action or quotas, are essential to ensure that there is a critical mass of women representatives in the WUAs. This has to be coupled with capacity building of female leaders who can play a key role in the functioning of WUAs. A study by the International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC) of community water and sanitation projects in 88 communities in 15 countries found that projects designed and run with the full participation of women are more sustainable and effective than those that are not. This supports an earlier World Bank study that found that women's participation was strongly associated with the effectiveness of water and

Women are excluded from WUAs for several reasons:

- Women are not landowners and most of the social and legal rights to land rest with men.
- Women, for various reasons, do not handle irrigation, which includes opening and closing of floodgates.
- It is believed that women find it daunting to handle water-related conflicts as it requires a certain "toughness" and they do not have negotiating skills.
- Women themselves opt out of organisations whose membership is predominantly male.
- Women have inadequate information about the workings and advantages of being a member of a WUA.
- Existing cultural and social norms also limit women's participation in public spaces. It is even harder for women from marginalised communities such as Dalits to be part of these bodies.
- Historically, women have played a key role in issues of water management and they possess knowledge and skills for doing this effectively. However, their knowledge is devalued and ignored.
- Women in general are less educated and low literacy also prevents them from engaging in WUAs.
- The introduction of technology has further eroded women's control over water. For example, when diesel pumps were introduced to extract water, only men were trained to operate the pumps, although women were the main water users. Women, as a result, became dependent on male pump operators.



Women wait for water from leaky hoses from a tanker in Kusumpur Pahari. The slum has no running water or sewage facilities. The only water supply comes from the Municipal JAL Board and is supposed to be free, but in reality, residents must pay bribes to have the water delivered.

“For women, the water crisis is personal. Women around the world spend over 200 million hours every day collecting water.”

sanitation projects. Women’s involvement has led to improved management of the resource and greater transparency in the projects. Yet women make up less than 17% of the water, sanitation, and hygiene labour force and a fraction of the policymakers, regulators, management,

and technical experts. The observations of the PWESCR research team on a recent field visit to Rajasthan, India to monitor an NDB-funded water resource management project reflect the fact that in this project, women are not in decision-making bodies or spaces. However, the recent increase in the number of women appointed as water and environment ministers is heartening, and this may provide an impetus to greater integration of gender concerns in water programmes. There has also been growing awareness that water programmes will be effective only if all sections of a community are included in water resource management and sectoral water use (including water, sanitation, and hygiene [WASH]) programmes). The World Bank has published a report titled *The rising tide: a new look at water and gender*, which characterises water as “an asset, a service and a space” and illustrates how water can “reflect and even reinforce” gender inequality. Women’s rights over resources, including water, and especially the rights of women from marginalised

backgrounds, are denied, particularly during times of scarcity. Given the divide between the domestic and the public, women’s role in household water supply finds some acknowledgement but her role vis-à-vis water use in farming and irrigation and small enterprises is generally ignored. She is viewed as the provider of water, while her role in conserving and managing the resource is seldom acknowledged.

The New Development Bank (NDB) and water

The NDB was established in July 2015 by the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). The bank emerged as a response to financial crises and as a result of the growing power of emerging economies. These countries were also frustrated with the pace of “voice” reform within the Bretton Woods institutions. In this sense, the bank is a physical expression of the desire of emerging markets to play a bigger role in global governance. The demand in these countries for the rapid expansion

of infrastructure (seen as essential for economic growth) was significant, hence the urgent need for investment in this sector. Therefore, the bank was set up to bridge the gap between the demand and supply of infrastructure and to promote sustainable development. The NDB's current portfolio has 49 projects, with loans aggregating to US\$ 13.7 billion. The NDB has clearly spelt out its priority: "To mobilise resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects." Eighty percent of the bank's loans have been directed towards transport, clean energy, water and sanitation. The NDB has declared that the "commitment to sustainable infrastructure is a standout feature of the NDB". In its general strategy paper, operation features as one of its five key areas of operation. The strategy paper reads in part as follows: "Irrigation, water resource management and sanitation: A modernised agricultural sector is critical for a country's development path, and requires advanced and efficient irrigation systems and sound management of a country's scarce water resources. Supplying adequate drinking water and improved sanitation is important to health outcomes, living standards and economic growth, especially in underserved rural and peri-urban areas." With respect to irrigation, water resource and sanitation, priority areas would include: i) irrigation infrastructure, ii) clean drinking water supply and sanitation, and iii) technology to enable efficient management of water resources. The issue of sustenance farming that most women, especially in BRICS countries, are engaged in, finds no mention. There is also no commitment to ensure that the technology adopted, does not result in a loss of livelihood, or that if local technology is adopted it would be the appropriate kind. It is essential to address the gender aspects of the water policy upfront because in conventional irrigation policy, women are almost non-existent and their concerns are seen as irrelevant since farming and irrigation are seen as being linked to "production". The touchstone for these projects is the *Environment and Sustainability Framework*. Water finds two mentions in this document. In the first, the document broadly talks about the idea of conservation of natural

resources where it says: "The NDB promotes the conservation of natural resources, including energy and water, and it supports sustainable land use management and urban development." The second mention is about using water (along with energy, and other resources and material) effectively. Given that women are central to ensuring sustainable development, projects that address their needs, such as water systems that cater to "multiple use" (meaning that they provide water for drinking, small plots and some livestock), may address a range of basic needs of rural women. The NDB is one of the most opaque and gender-neutral IFIs as it does not disclose any project-related information publicly. Neither has it demonstrated any commitment towards gender equality. Since 2017, BRICS Feminist Watch (BFW) has consistently urged the NDB to set up an external gender advisory, develop a gender policy and recruit senior-level gender experts to support the bank to ensure that a gender analysis of all its structures and operations is carried out in a timely and systematic manner. The NDB has taken none of these measures and it continues to function in a "gender-neutral" manner such that its projects have a negative impact on women's lives and contribute directly or indirectly to increasing gender gaps. The NDB-funded water resource management project in Rajasthan, India – RWSRPD, is aimed at rehabilitating the Indira Gandhi Nahar Project (IGNP) canal system, built 60 years ago, to prevent seepage, conserve water and enhance water use efficiency and productivity. The IGNP already exists and it is the lifeline for the people of Rajasthan, a multi-use water system that provides water for irrigation, domestic use and industry, including a thermal power plant. The RWSRPD aims to address the gender and other gaps in the existing project.

Over the last 60 years, there has been an explosion of new knowledge and experience on water resource management through community involvement and WUAs, including the recognition of the potential of community-led resource management systems as models for good governance by people. The Terms of Reference for Environment and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) and

Environment and Social Management Plan (ESMP) under the RWSRPD recognises this aspect: "The project would examine if the policies and decision-making are more transparent and vulnerable groups have more voice. Opportunities to further improve participation of such vulnerable groups, especially issues of gender, should be explored to ensure their upliftment and enhance their livelihood options. Of specific interest would be the proactive role women can play in planning, implementation and monitoring of various activities relating to the project, such as, say, in the WUAs." This is a welcome step. However, given the opaqueness of the bank, it is uncertain if and how these were conducted. The website for example does not have any information on public hearings, which are at the heart of the ESIA. The fear is that local economic considerations would tend to take precedence over critical questioning during public hearing events.

Lessons learnt and way forward

In the absence of a clear gender policy and a gender expert, there is a glaring omission of women and women's lives and realities in NDB-funded projects. They are reduced to a mere checklist exercise without clear gender indicators, and gender dimensions are added as an afterthought. In the absence of integrated gender analysis in all stages of the project, including planning, design, implementation and monitoring, the NDB will continue to run the risk of perpetuating gender inequalities and causing more damage than good for women. Therefore, we reiterate BFW's three-point gender approach for NDB: 1. External gender advisory, 2. Gender policy, and 3. Gender expert. All IFIs, including, the NDB, in all their water resource management projects, should have a strategy to mainstream gender by ensuring women's economic empowerment, their overall wellbeing and their equal and engaged participation in all decision-making processes. **BR**

Full policy paper with references available on www.bricsfeministwatch.org/

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INSIGHT

VLADIMIR KOROVKIN

Will Africa Close the Digital Divide?



ONE OF THE BIGGEST QUESTIONS OF THE DIGITAL ERA IS WHETHER THE FRUITS OF TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT WILL RESULT IN A SOLUTION TO THE WORLD'S BIGGEST SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEM: UNACCEPTABLE INEQUALITY OF DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH OR, LEAD TO A NEW VERSION OF THE GLOOMY MARXIST PROPHECY, "THE RICH GET RICHER, AND THE POOR GET POORER". THE PROBLEM, DEFINED AS "THE DIGITAL DIVIDE" IN THE LATE 1990s, HAS TO DO WITH THE DISPARITY IN ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES RESULTING FROM A LACK OF ACCESS TO MODERN TECHNOLOGY FOR CERTAIN SOCIAL GROUPS, REGIONS OR NATIONS.

Africa overall remains the world's most underdeveloped continent, hosting all of the 10 poorest countries, all of the 10 countries with lowest life expectancy and nine of the 10 countries with lowest literacy. Transport and communications, together with the lack of adequate power supply, all exacerbated by terrain and climate, are the infrastructural barriers to development. There is even a school of thought that claims that digital technologies should appear

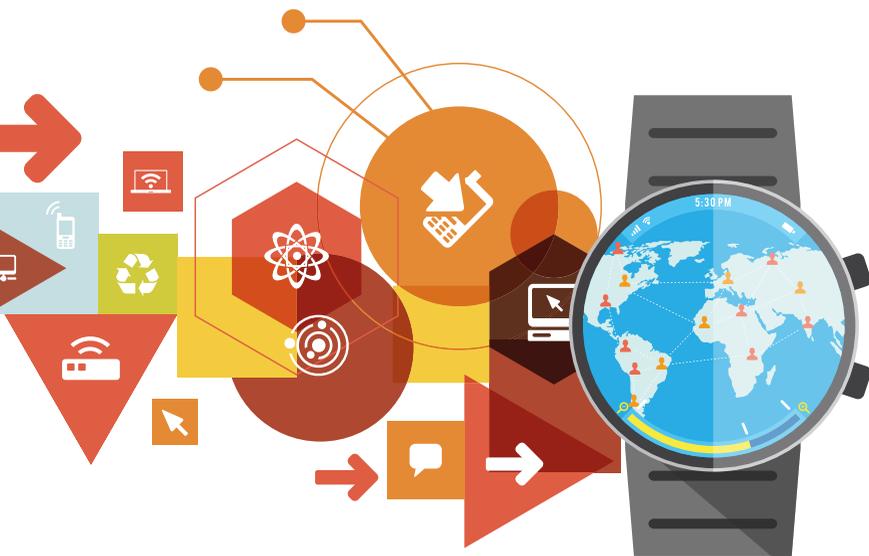


high on the African agenda to ensure significant progress will be achieved in those "basic" areas.

Ted Turner, the founder of CNN, said: "We talk about the digital divide... We want to get computers in everyone's hands. But half the people in the world do not have electricity. Over a billion do not have access to clean drinking water. Forget the digital divide, they need food, water, clothing, shelter and a chance for an education." This scepticism largely misses the point of the digital technologies, which can be the instruments of solving the problems of food, water, energy and education, not an alternative to them. Trying to catch up with the advanced economies of the world through moving step by step is hardly a viable strategy – this route could widen the development gap. What Africa needs is a leapfrog in development of an almost unprecedented scale. Creatively adopting new

technologies looks like the only realistic chance to do this.

What change did the arrival of digital technology make? On the brighter side, some African countries have scored remarkable achievements in the digital economy. Take the example of M-Pesa in Kenya: it is the world's largest system of mobile money in relation to GDP. Africa is the continent where digital – in the form of mobile communication – becomes the most inclusive piece of infrastructure. Take also the example of Chad, a country roughly in the middle of the continental ranking in terms of GDP per capita: while 50.8% of the population has access to an improved water source, 35.4% are literate and only 4% enjoy access to electricity, there are 52 mobile subscriptions per 100 inhabitants. As a result, the share of the mobile economy in GDP in Sub-Saharan Africa is considerably higher than the world average: 7.7% versus 4.6%. The continent has its digital corporate



“Africa needs to creatively leverage the few strengths that it has developed in the digital space to accelerate its development drive. Those strengths are mobile, digital finance and pan-African cooperation.”

giants, like Naspers from South Africa with a market capitalisation of US\$70 billion.

Still, Africa faces huge challenges in the digital era. It generally lacks resources to develop adequate infrastructure; most of the countries are too small as markets to nurture globally competitive players; there is a strong unmet need for human resources with world-class digital skills. The highest place an African country has in the Network Readiness Index is 49th, held by Mauritius, a small and effective service-based economy. Then comes South Africa, at number 65. The advent of powerful data processing systems, the ‘big data era’, opening many new economic opportunities, is another challenge. The continent is naturally handicapped here due to the climate, as the data centres are producing heat at mass scale; are most effective in cold environments. Additionally, countries in Africa are short on electric power generation, while data

centres are power-intensive. The necessary hardware also requires significant financing. Currently, the continent hosts only two of the world’s top-500 supercomputers, both of them in South Africa.

To sum up: even if African countries are closing the so-called “first-level digital divide”, the disparity with the advanced economies in terms of share of population accessing the Internet, there are the inequality of digital skills and modes of use of technologies (the “second-level divide”) and the resulting differences in the depth of penetration of digital technologies into everyday life (the “third-level divide”). Unfortunately, there is too little research available to answer the question of whether the latter divides are diminishing or growing. Yet, the scholars of digital inequality do agree that government policy is the second most important factor that affects it, after the level of wealth in a country.

Thus, the continent requires careful and insightful strategic planning for the development of the digital economy. Such planning should include concerted national efforts by both state and private actors with focused prioritisation of actions aimed at overcoming the deficit of resources and maximising the benefits of digital technologies on socio-economic development.

About half of African countries currently have national digital strategies but very few have a strategy for a national digital economy. The strategies that exist are too focused on the issues of basic infrastructural development and overcoming the first-level divide. This is understandable, as infrastructure is the traditional domain of direct government actions. Yet it misses the key point of digital transformation: it is about the effects of the creative use of new technologies, not about the technological

base per se. As was said, catching up through replicating the pathway of the advanced economies is likely to widen the technology gap, not close it.

Africa needs to creatively leverage the few strengths that it has developed in the digital space to accelerate its development drive. Those strengths are mobile, digital finance and pan-African cooperation. The share of the mobile economy in the GDP of Sub-Saharan countries is already almost twice the world average; the continent has developed unique ecosystems that use very cheap and robust technologies to achieve amazing results. An integral part of those ecosystems is digital money. M-Pesa from Kenya largely opened the eyes of world bankers to the potential of mobile payments. Finally, while the countries of the continent individually are relatively small markets (only Nigeria has a chance to enter the global top 20 by the size of GDP), combined, they host over 1.2 billion customers.

The continent has made some interesting progress in coordinating efforts in the digital space. The African Union convention on data is currently a unique example in the world of harmonisation of national regulation in this important sphere. Ironically, though, the content of the convention may become a barrier rather than a stimulus in developing national digital economies, as the cost of compliance will be quite high for digital businesses that typically start up on a shoestring budget. As was said, the continent is naturally handicapped for developing data processing capabilities, so any legislation in the domain should be careful not to regulate away opportunities together with risks.

Unfortunately, the three domains of strength are seldom touched upon in the existing digital strategies of African nations. The issue of international cooperation is particularly overlooked, with typical strategy boldly stating that a country should become “a regional digital hub”, without further clarifying what it means or whether the ambition would be shared by other countries of the region.

Sometimes it seems that the agenda of digital transformation in the economy has not been internalised yet by the national stakeholders of most African countries. The way of strategizing about digital



“The modern efforts of an economic breakthrough on the African continent should take note of this lesson: the strategic plans should be based not only on the aspirational vision, but also on the sound analysis of possible barriers and challenges, as well as existing strengths.”

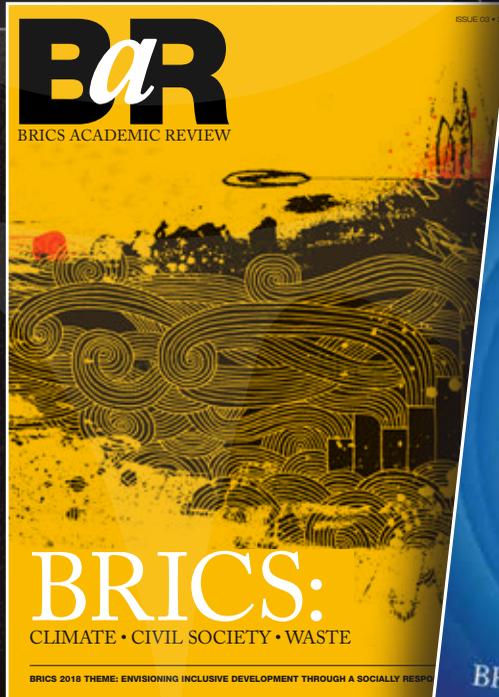
development reminds one of the “speeded industrialisation” agenda of the 1960s (promoted back then by economists like François Perroux). Africa was part of this effort, as stated in President Kwame Nkrumah’s speech of 1963: “We shall accumulate machinery and establish steel works, iron foundries and factories; we shall link the various states of our continent with communications; we shall astound the world with our hydroelectric power...” Almost 60 years later, we know that this bold vision met many challenges; overall, the project is far from being accomplished.

The modern efforts of an economic breakthrough on the African continent should take note of this lesson: the strategic plans should be based not only on the aspirational vision but also on the sound analysis of possible barriers and challenges as well as existing strengths. Clearly, African countries need to find an effective niche in the global digital economy, that will provide for the acceleration of inclusive social and economic development with technologies, with a focus on the

creation of human capital, industrialisation and bringing agriculture up to modern productivity standards. Given Africa’s resource constraints, these goals can only be achieved through focused, clearly prioritised policies with concerted nationwide efforts and private-public partnerships.

Is such a breakthrough possible at all? When Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping started his drive for modernisation in mid-1970s, China was poorer than many African countries by the factor of 10. Just some 20 years ago, China had lower GDP per capita than the Republic of Congo. Yet it managed to turn itself not just into a middle-income economy but also into a global technological giant. The future that Africa has in the digital era is not guaranteed to be bright, yet it is in the hands of the formal and informal leaders of the continent to shape it to the benefit of their nations and their people.

Source: www.bricsmagazine.com/ partner of the National Committee for BRICS Research, Russia



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OPINION

FREEDOM MAZWI

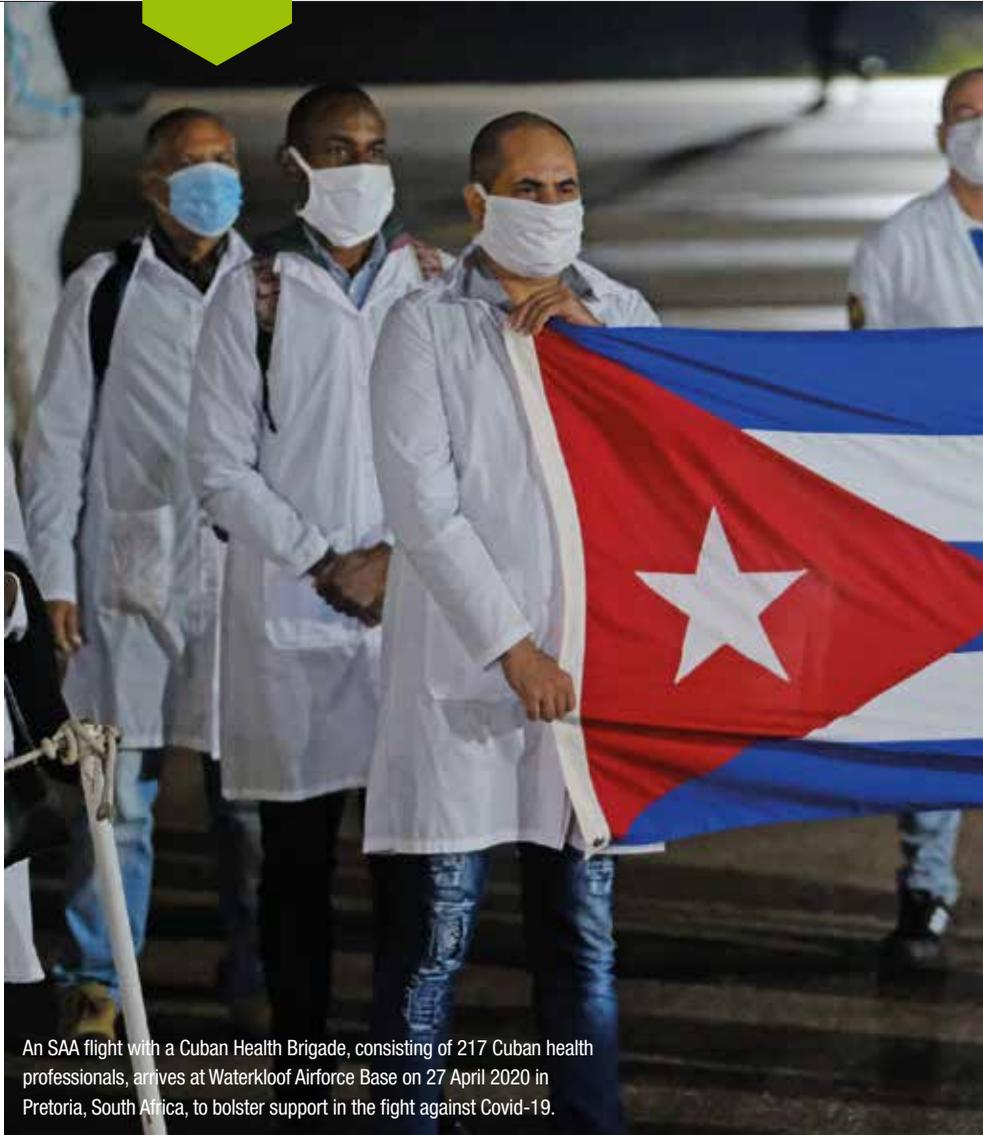
What Africa can learn from Cuba in combating the Covid-19 pandemic



It is close to four months since the first case of Covid-19 was reported in China, and today the world is facing one of the worst health, humanitarian and economic crises in modern history. The pandemic not only threatens to take hundreds of thousands of human lives, but also to drive the global economy into recession and render millions of people unemployed.

The crisis triggered by Covid-19 is voracious to the extent that highly industrialised countries which constitute the centre of the global economy, such as the United States of America (USA), the United Kingdom (UK), France and Germany, are some of the worst affected, with health systems that are failing to cope.

A number of analysts have argued that Covid-19 represents the failure of the global capitalist system, which survives on greed and the plundering of resources and the ecosystem (see Shivji 2020; Editorial 2020). In essence, this may mean the collapse of the system. The Covid-19 outbreak is a long-anticipated signal that has called



An SAA flight with a Cuban Health Brigade, consisting of 217 Cuban health professionals, arrives at Waterkloof Airforce Base on 27 April 2020 in Pretoria, South Africa, to bolster support in the fight against Covid-19.

for a rethink of a broader economic trajectory and policy frameworks to liberate people in peripheries from a hierarchical globalised capitalist system that has plunged people of the South into deteriorating living conditions. For example, the African continent has borne the brunt of the globalised capitalist system, as shown by the below-substandard, life-threatening healthcare system. To date, there

are countries in the South that have been able to contain and deal with the pandemic, and this article draws lessons, inspiration and courage from Cuba and Venezuela. In what follows, the paper discusses policy frameworks, the importance of solidarity and other crucial interventions that African countries can immediately implement in the short to medium term to contain Covid-19 and eliminate poverty.



Covid-19 and neoliberal capitalism

There is no doubt that the spread of Covid-19 is directly linked to neoliberal capitalism, a global economic system that has been dominant over the past four decades. The effect of neoliberal capitalism on the health system has been a retreat of the state in providing basic healthcare services in many African countries, and this has seen the privatisation of the healthcare sector.

Globally, this phenomenon has resulted in a catastrophe, particularly during Covid-19, where access to healthcare has been the preserve of the rich. Many African countries have, since their transition from colonialism, been unable to fully develop their public health systems due to fiscal constraints imposed by World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) prescriptions centred on limiting government

“ A number of analysts have argued that Covid-19 represents the failure of the global capitalist system, which survives on greed and the plundering of resources and the ecosystem. ”

expenditure in the public health sector. The privatisation of the health sector now manifests itself in the inability to absorb the growing number of Covid-19 victims not only in the metropolis, but in peripheral countries as well. The failure to provide free or affordable tests, and the shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE) for health workers who are leading the fight against this pandemic are all indicators of a capitalist system that has failed to deliver in this neoliberal era.

Amidst crisis there is hope. Despite attempts by neoliberal apologists and the mainstream international media to project capitalism as the only solution to the crisis we are facing, Cuba has made advances in fighting this pandemic and there are specific features inherent in this country and other, that we must closely analyse. These include development paths pursued by such countries that place



Cuban doctor Liz Caballero (R) and two medical students go door to door looking for possible cases of the novel coronavirus, Covid-19, in Havana on 31 March 2020.

emphasis on egalitarianism, complete repudiation of the capitalist path, strong investments in public healthcare systems, internationalism, solidarity and voluntarism.

It is important to state at this point that in spite of sanctions and other economic and political destabilisation tactics employed by the USA and its key allies against Cuba for close on six decades, the number of Covid-19 fatalities it has recorded is among the lowest worldwide. Cuba's Minister of Public Health, Dr Jose Angel Miranda, reported that by 29 March 2020, a total of 139 cases and three deaths had been recorded. This is in contrast to the USA which, despite its wealth, had over 100 000 Covid-19 cases and more than 4 000 fatalities at the end of March with the fatality level surpassing 800 on some days. This present Covid-19 lethality in the capitalist system calls for analysis as it defies the common narrative that a privatised healthcare system is efficient and accessible when services are required. Thus, the capitalist system's touts – under the so-called banner of the invisible hand – that it can sort out any demand and supply challenges, defies logic. And so we discuss the health sector in Cuba.

Socialising the healthcare system

It is important at this stage to acknowledge the wisdom of Fidel Castro, the former leader of Cuba, who saw through the evils of privatisation and commodification of the public health sector. Unlike many countries in the North and the South that privatised their public health systems, Castro did the opposite by ensuring that support for this sector was increased and made available to all members of the society.

Although faced with an economic embargo, it must be emphatically stated that the country has been a shining star in the fight against Covid-19.

Quite clearly, the successes are rooted in the universal healthcare system and tough measures put in place by former president Raul Castro. These measures include the declaration of a health emergency, home visits to all citizens suspected to be infected and offering free treatment. This is unlike many countries, where such services could only be accessed after payment of a certain fee. Patnaik (2020a) notes that the current crisis has brought about:

“the socialisation of healthcare and production of some essential services, which

departs from the capitalist norm; and the more severe the crisis, the greater is the degree of socialisation.”

There is no doubt that the socialisation and nationalisation of healthcare services is something that was learnt from countries such as Cuba. This phenomenon has advanced with varying intensity in highly capitalist countries such as Spain, the UK and the USA. It is an approach which must be emulated by African countries in the fight against Covid-19.

When we talk of Africa, we must however, take into account its historical and present realities. Colonialism, neoliberalism and, in some cases, poor leadership have rendered African states almost incapable of resolving some of these emerging issues. The plausible way forward is to rethink development models best suited for the continent instead of adopting prescriptions from the Bretton Woods institutions which have stalled development on the continent. Key in this will be a reversal of privatisation and the adoption of universal healthcare.

The continent, alongside other developing regions, has experienced a

brain drain in the health sector, and the time to put this to an end is now. The presence of healthcare workers is critical in minimising the damage in times of outbreaks such as Covid-19. As Max Ajl (2020) notes:

“Training excellent nurses and doctors can be done extremely cheaply, part of the reason Cuba has a world-class medical system. But if wrenched from a nation through the quiet inducement of market coercion or the louder process of social dislocation/primitive accumulation on a national scale, the commonwealth resource of medical training can become a resource to be pillaged.”

equipped to work under supervisors in times of outbreaks such as Covid-19. The story of Cuba’s containment of Covid-19 would be incomplete without mentioning the role of volunteers in spreading the message and door-to-door treatment of affected and infected people. This can only happen when there is a sense of patriotism which compels everyone to save people and the nation.

Venezuela has also shown that the issuing of food packs, which is a socialist approach, can, despite the battering of its economy, help during times of a disaster such as Covid-19. This is a recognition that during disaster-enforced lockdowns,

been witnessed in some countries located in the South. Instead of sending medical supplies to rescue a continent that has been ravaged by imperialism for over a century, Western countries are sending aeroplanes to evacuate their nationals as if Covid-19 originated from Africa. The metropolis has been found wanting when it comes to international solidarity.

Turning to Cuba, we learn a number of lessons. Despite having its own challenges whose origins are rooted in the international onslaught led by the USA, Cuba is currently present in 13 countries, which include Andorra, Italy, Spain, China, Venezuela and Caribbean nations, to help fight Covid-19. Turning to Africa, there is clearly a need for close cooperation among African states at this stage and it is surprising that since the outbreak, there has been no notable collective action or statement coming from the leadership of the African Union on how it proposes to tackle the pandemic. The continent can build on the already existing sub-regional blocks to launch an offensive against the pandemic.

Conclusion

To end, emphasis must be placed on the need to abandon the neoliberal path in economic development and social service provision for the continent to be able to deal with Covid-19 and other health system challenges that are likely to emerge in future. Apart from denouncing the privatisation agenda of health and other social services, it is also important to socialise the health services and the production of essential services. The need to utilise the untapped resource of medical students and volunteers while dealing with the brain drain in the health sector cannot be overemphasised. Lastly, as already highlighted, international solidarity is critical when dealing with global challenges such as Covid-19. The African Union and sub-regional bodies must step up and be counted in critical times like these. Covid-19 is a real test for the African leadership and an opportune platform for charting a new pro-poor development path.

“Another key lesson to be drawn from Cuba in the face of a massive skills haemorrhage, is the use of an important untapped resource in the form of medical students and volunteers who can be equipped to work under supervisors in times of outbreaks such as Covid-19.”

The loss of health personnel to the metropolis is not only a loss of human personnel but also of financial resources for peripheral states. This is so because underdeveloped countries pour resources into training health personnel for the benefit of developed countries; this is an important indicator highlighting new forms of imperialism under global contemporary neoliberal capitalism. Although recognising that it is almost impossible to halt the brain drain given the unequal power relations on the world stage, it is equally important for developing countries to put in place mechanisms to slow this brain drain.

Another key lesson to be drawn from Cuba in the face of a massive skills haemorrhage, is the use of an important untapped resource in the form of medical students and volunteers who can be

most people are unable to work and fend for their families. A food distribution programme, if implemented alongside suspension of payment of rentals and protection of worker rights, can go a long way in protecting Africans during these difficult times. This is an important lesson to be drawn from Venezuela.

International solidarity

One of the major failures of neoliberal capitalism at this current juncture has been its resort to inward-looking strategies and the practice of “new nationalisms” (see Shivji 2020) and fascism (Patnaik 2020b; Yeros and Jha, 2020). By this we make reference to what we have seen of late in developed countries, with the exception of Portugal, where the state has turned against immigrants in offering health and other social services. This phenomenon has also

References related to the feature are available on request: contact.f.mazwi@ru.ac.za

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ANALYSIS



Health officials check the body temperature of a driver at the Tamil Nadu-Andhra Pradesh interstate border during a government-imposed lockdown as a preventive measure against the Covid-19 coronavirus, on outskirts of Chennai on 24 March 2020.

PROF SAMIR SARAN

Coexisting with #Covid-19: Saving lives and the economy in India



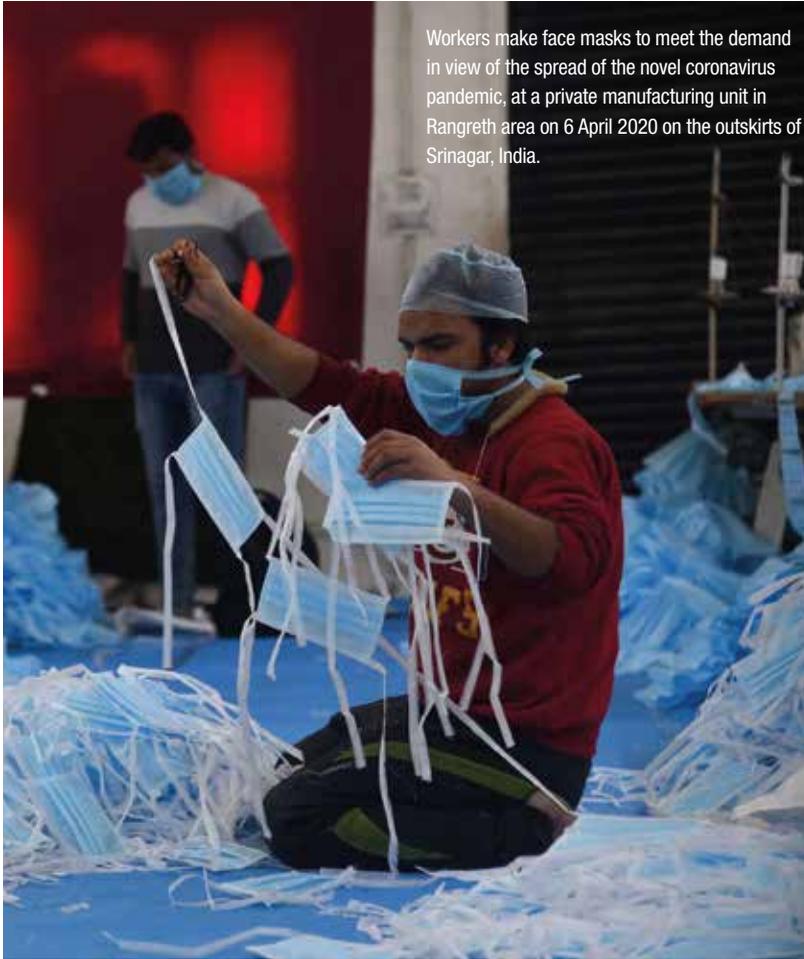
Experts at India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare published a paper on 9 April 2020, looking at 41 sentinel sites across the country. It revealed that of the 5 911 severe acute respiratory illness (SARI) patients tested since 15 February, 1.8% have tested positive for Covid-19. Of those who tested

positive, 39.2% did not report international travel or any history of contact with a known patient – clearly indicating that at least parts of India are likely to be in the stage of community transmission. By itself, this is neither unusual nor surprising – it is indeed the nature of pandemics to take root in communities over time.

A total of 179 374 samples from 164 773 individuals have been tested as of 11 April 2020. Just around 7 703 individuals have been confirmed Covid-19 positive. India is testing just over 17 000 samples per day, which is inadequate given the vastness of the country and the current spread covering almost half the districts. This means that the true scale of spread remains unknown and most areas remain potential breakout zones. The spurts that we are witnessing in cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Jaipur, Indore, and

Ahmedabad are cause for deep concern.

Despite efforts over the past few weeks to give it a boost, India's healthcare delivery capacity remains limited. According to the government, an order for 49 000 ventilators has been placed in view of the low numbers that exist within the system, but it is unclear by when they will arrive and be distributed among the special centres created for Covid-19 patients. The government has acknowledged the need for "rapidly ramping up" the number of corona-testing facilities, personal protective equipment (PPEs), isolation beds, ICU beds, ventilators, and other essential equipment. This only serves to highlight the fact that the current levels of healthcare facilities will not stand a chance of coping with a sudden and huge surge. Hence, a national lockdown was, and remains, the only option since any widespread community breakout



Workers make face masks to meet the demand in view of the spread of the novel coronavirus pandemic, at a private manufacturing unit in Rangreth area on 6 April 2020 on the outskirts of Srinagar, India.

“India is testing just over 17 000 samples per day, which is inadequate given the vastness of the country and the current spread covering almost half the districts.”

will overwhelm medical infrastructure.

If we go by what has been officially stated, more than half of India’s districts are yet to record a single case of Covid-19. But the virus may have made its way to many of these districts. Whether or not this is true will only be known through increased testing, which has not happened and is something that needs to be rectified with alacrity.

India has no doubt responded strongly and decisively to the crisis by opting for a countrywide lockdown. According to the Oxford Covid-19 Government Response Tracker (OxCGRT) database’s Stringency Index, on 25 March, India was the sixth country to opt for a complete lockdown and achieve a stringency index score of 100.

Yet, the fact remains that the lockdown is a blunt instrument. A country like India cannot afford to

indefinitely extend it across regions when a clear assessment of the risk of community spread is impossible for lack of information.

The lockdown, as we have it now, has virtually brought the national economy to a grinding halt. This hurts the informal workforce, micro businesses, and unorganised labour the most, and is bound to have long-lasting implications. The use of a nationwide lockdown, instead of a fine-grained approach, was a forced hand because of the impossibility of conducting local-level assessments of the spread. The cost of not testing smartly or widely enough – whatever the reason – is unfortunately being borne disproportionately by daily wagers and vulnerable groups.

We can only hope that the experts the government is consulting have briefed the political leadership about the lessons learnt – nationally and globally – over

the past few months. And that in the next week or two, we will not be blinded by lack of information or intent, or be limited by tentativeness of action. One must make it clear that full marks need to be given for the stringent 21-day lockdown: It was the need of the hour.

However, as of now we have failed to capitalise on the time advantage the lockdown has given us. We need to think on our feet, tap into every resource possible, and formulate an exit strategy rather than make the poor pay for an overburdened system’s lack of agility. We also need to prevent value destruction on account of unimaginative policy.

This is the moment to embrace talent from outside the confines of government and infuse economic policy with ideas to reignite the Indian economy and tell the world that the India story is far from over. Prime Minister Narendra Modi must seize the moment.

Various assessments of the post-pandemic world suggest that there is a real threat of gains in poverty reduction being reversed on account of Covid-19’s impact on the global economy. India would not remain untouched if this were to happen. We need to act now to mitigate the impact of the blow even if we cannot avoid it entirely.

India is an outlier in terms of the scale and extent of the lockdown. Over the next fortnight, we should



An Indian man wearing a protective mask sits on a bench, as India remains under an unprecedented lockdown over the highly contagious coronavirus (Covid-19) on 10 April 2020 in New Delhi, India.

aggressively try and map the spread of the virus using methods such as countrywide sample testing or pooled testing. It is encouraging that States like Maharashtra are currently considering such strategies. We need to come up with a blueprint for a staggered approach to get us out of the unsustainable country-level total lockdown.

India cannot be a country in suspended animation, waiting for a miracle to happen. For, a miracle won't happen, no matter how hard we pray for it. That is not how killer viruses run their course. That is definitely not how the Covid-19 pandemic is playing out globally. A pragmatic and scientific approach is the only way out of this seemingly impossible maze; that's how you win a game of Chinese Checkers.

Three stark comparisons have emerged in the past two weeks. Statistically, despite its limited health infrastructure, India has done better than most others – especially advanced nations in Europe and America with fabled health services – in terms of

infections, hospital admissions, ICU crowding, and fatalities.

Second, India has witnessed strong cooperation between the union government and state governments (health is a State List subject, a fact often forgotten or unknown to commentators) and there has been bipartisan support for the measures initiated by the prime minister. In other democracies, bitter partisan politics over Covid-19 have been on display.

Third, India is the only large economy where a lockdown has been accompanied by the near shutting down

of the national economy, resulting in an unprecedented disruption in jobs, productivity, and revenue.

If prevention is the primary tool India has adopted, then a blanket lockdown cannot be the only instrument we use. Tech and data-driven mapping of senior citizens and those people suffering from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) has to be extensively conducted. Everything from Aadhar and municipal data to digitised hospital records need to be scanned to figure out exactly who must stay home – and will need to be assisted in this regard – and who can be

“A national lockdown was, and remains, the only option since any widespread community breakout will overwhelm medical infrastructure.”

“The fact remains that the lockdown is a blunt instrument. A country like India cannot afford to indefinitely extend it across regions when a clear assessment of the risk of community spread is impossible for lack of information.”



Omandurar Medical College hospital staff gesture as an Indian Air Force helicopter drops flower petals to pay tribute to all those involved in the fight against the spread of the Covid-19 coronavirus, in Chennai on May 3, 2020.

permitted to return to a less restrictive, soft-lockdown work environment. Community health workers must be deployed for aggressive mapping of villages and urban settlements for the invisible elderly and chronically ill. Finding those who do not exist in any current electronic health record is key. Of course, this has to be a ‘privacy sensitive’ exercise.

We have seen a skilful deployment of the lockdown by all, but this policy hammer has not been accompanied by a sharp economic respite. Experts from India and abroad seem to converge on the idea that spending is necessary and that money deployed must reach its intended goal within a specified timeframe. These goals must include lifeline protections, support for supply chains and demand stimulation, and wealth protection. While the central government must focus on the macro instruments and agencies, its energy must now also be directed towards protecting capital. The state governments must partner

with specialised institutions to respond to local challenges that are contextual and individual and, in such instances, community programmes must be implemented.

It could be argued, and correctly so, that human lives matter more than the economy, which can be rebuilt. While this sentiment may sustain popular support for strong measures to control and roll back the pandemic, it will not obviate the need to address serious concerns linked to the economy, which sustains livelihoods and, hence, life itself.

This is why a staggered exit from the lockdown, accompanied by stepped-up testing to cover every district, is necessary. A containment policy has been drafted and is already being implemented by several states after identifying ‘hot spots’. There is across-the-board agreement on what must not be done – namely, resumption of interstate travel by plane, train, or bus.

What we need now is an agreement on what can be done. This list must include the immediate resumption of

agricultural activity (harvesting cannot wait for too long); the restarting of certain micro, medium, and small enterprises so that the impact on jobs and income disruption is minimal; and the resumption of basic economic activities like reviving stalled supply lines and retail services to ensure the looming crisis of essential goods is avoided while “social distancing” remains in place. In the next stage, the resumption of other activities like construction and the reopening of some commercial and trading entities can be considered. Industries must then begin to operate under a special safety protocol, which will ensure protection.

If the challenge of shutting down India was huge, the challenge of reopening India will be bigger. But India cannot, and must not, remain shut down for longer than what it takes to get its act together. Lives matter; so does the economy. Let’s not force ourselves into a corner where we have to make a false choice. **BR**

Source: www.orfonline.org/

REPORT

Brics Academic Forum Brasilia, 2019

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Since the global financial crisis of 2008, the BRICS have become institutionally stronger. The creation of

the New Development Bank and working groups in various areas have demonstrated the BRICS' capacity to propose solutions to global governance problems. This concerted effort has been possible because they share similar interests and principles, which orient their foreign relations, especially a preference for multilateralism, respect for sovereignty, emphasis on dialogue, and focus on sustainable growth and development. Aiming at deepening intra-BRICS cooperation and expanding BRICS' contribution to solve global governance problems, the Brazilian presidency in 2019 has focused on six critical topics: financing for development; trade and investment; science, technology and innovation; energy and development; transnational crime; and agriculture. In this year's academic forum, these topics were discussed in specific panels, all having representatives from each of the five BRICS countries. In this report, there is a summary of the presentations and discussions.

Financing for Development

Currently, there are more than 550 development financial institutions in the world, with total assets of more than US\$5 trillion. One of these institutions' goals is to reduce the enormous infrastructure deficit in developing countries, estimated at US\$2 trillion a year. The New Development Bank is one among many development financial institutions, designed to finance infrastructure and

sustainable development projects. Although recent, the NDB is a solid institution, as evaluated by credit rating agencies. This indicates a market-oriented approach of the bank, as well as the BRICS' responsibility towards current international financial regimes. However, the NDB faces a few challenges. First, despite a huge effort to increase the number of projects and processing times, the amount of credit granted so far is lower than initially expected. This is due mainly to the low quality of a few projects or to the risks they involve. On the latter, this occurs frequently because infrastructure projects in emerging economies pose a greater risk of default.

On the former, the group should have a space to orient potential borrowers on how to improve the projects' quality. Second, it is hard to estimate natural capital costs, a resource that the BRICS have in abundance. This problem is not exclusive to the BRICS, however, resulting in part from the absence of general regulations concerning the value of natural resources.

The NDB should be only one among many other instruments of the BRICS to finance development. The BRICS should use at least two other instruments. First, public-private partnerships. Second, BRICS market integration, including the creation of common rules concerning banking systems, stock markets, clearing procedures, anti-corruption, and offshore activities. This could also include a BRICS payment system and a stock exchange alliance. All these policies should be based on successful experiences from other countries or groups of countries.

Trade and Investment

The participation of the BRICS in the global trade has been stable since 2011. The panel stressed that there has been a tariff reduction in global trade over the last years, though accompanied by an increase of non-tariff barriers. Although there has been an increase in intra-BRICS

trade as a proportion of their total trade, levels of intra-BRICS trade are still low. Concerning investment flows and stock, levels are also low: Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the BRICS still comes mainly from developed countries. For example, levels of FDI in India from the other BRICS are negligible. In order to estimate gains that the BRICS would have from reducing intra-BRICS barriers, a Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP) simulation was presented in the panel. Concerning tariff reduction, simulations demonstrated that – except for Russia – fewer barriers would increase Gross Domestic Product, investment levels, real wages, exports and imports in all the BRICS, and that these gains would be cumulative over the years. For this reason, panellists suggested the need to create a free trade agreement or a partial scope agreement between the BRICS. Nevertheless, it was also stressed that work aimed at creation of Free Trade Agreement among BRICS countries should not be forced due to sensitive sectors and regulatory measures in BRICS economies. Besides, the participation of some BRICS countries in customs unions should be considered. Creating a BRICS visa was also suggested, which could facilitate flows of businesspeople, academics and tourists. Regarding digital trade and e-commerce, its development has been a solution for the problem of geographical distance and has the potential to increase the share of trade in services even further. Yet, international trade rules lag far behind, and the problem of whether this is an instrument to hide protectionism remains opaque: while some countries label digital regulation as trade protectionism, others consider such policies vital to pursue legitimate goals. The question that needs to be answered is whether laws that are being introduced create barriers for digital trade and e-commerce development and may be used as an instrument of digital protectionism.



This is a problem in the BRICS: according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Digital Services Trade Restrictiveness Index, the BRICS countries have some of the most restrictive regulations in the world. In order to facilitate digital trade and e-commerce (and thus prevent this problem), BRICS members should work together, provide information related to the current domestic regulation, and share existing methodological approaches and best practices to enhance digital trade policy assessment tools. Besides, BRICS economies must take an opportunity to articulate their common digital agenda in

such areas as information and data security, paperless trade, consumers' and IPR protection, trade in services, etc.

Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)

In the context of the 4th Industrial revolution, the importance of expanding STI cooperation was a key point in the panel. Yet, increasing cooperation will require working through networks involving many actors, including those in the state, market and civil society. In order to manage this network, the BRICS may consider the creation of a technological alliance, coordinated by a council formed

by officials at the level of deputy prime ministers in charge of science, education and innovation. A potential model for the BRICS is the European Union: although specificities should be considered, the BRICS could use Europe's bottom-up approach as a model, where many institutions are involved. The BRICS could look at the experiences of the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST), European Patent Organisation, Eureka programme, Horizon 2020, and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology

Specifically, on networks of academics and scientists, the panel stressed that

intra-BRICS cooperation is very limited. This should be an opportunity for research institutes, universities, companies, government institutions and think tanks. They should develop denser networks, which could – among other aims – provide evidence-based research and recommendations to policymakers. In addition, the BRICS should consider that the boundaries of the digital economy continue to expand, as well as that boundaries between the digital and non-digital economies are increasingly blurred. Concerning the development of financial technologies, there is a need for global standards, which could expand cooperation in various issue-areas: crowdfunding and peer to peer; third-party payment and cross-border e-commerce; blockchain and digital currency; big data; and artificial intelligence. At the same time, the BRICS should work to deliver better government services to people through technology by expanding the use of common platforms, services and tools; rethinking how governments buy digital services; and bringing top technical talents into the civil service. This would increase access to information by citizens, empower under-served populations, and potentially improve skills in the informal economy. Finally, given the importance of ethical aspects in certain types of research, the BRICS could form an ethics working group. An agreement on acceptable technology applications would help fast-track technology transfers between the BRICS countries and thus, expedite innovation.

Energy and Development

The BRICS countries are key players concerning energy, being responsible for around 38% of the total energy consumption in the world. Although each country has a unique energy matrix, they share a few similarities, which can serve as a basis for expanding cooperation: they all need to expand energy production and efficiency, while also increasing the use of renewable energy sources. The BRICS should increase cooperation on both renewable and non-renewable energy sources, though always considering the need to transition to a low-carbon economy. They should strengthen infrastructure construction and cooperation in oil and gas pipeline networks, as well as improve electricity installation and power grids. As coal is still a major energy source and the BRICS have around 45% of the world's coal reserves, they should seek in the short-term to substitute old by modern coal technologies, including ultra-low emission coal-fired power plants; coal-to-liquids (CTL) and coal-to-gas (CTG); and carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS). Taken all BRICS countries have various degrees of relying on coal power, they should consider plans to reduce or even eventually decommission coal power plants in the long term. Specifically, on renewable energy sources, the BRICS are currently responsible for around 41% of CO₂ emissions, and their emissions are rising. Yet, two elements should be stressed. First, in OECD countries consumption-based emissions are much higher than production-based emissions while in the

BRICS the opposite happens. Second, BRICS countries are major players in terms of installed capacity of wind farms and solar power, among which China is the top producer of wind turbines. In addition, some of the BRICS dominate various technologies related to the production of biofuel and hydropower, and Brazil is well positioned to transition to a low-carbon economy (43% of its energy source is renewable).

Additionally, India is spearheading global efforts to facilitate access of technology and finance for solar projects through the International Solar Alliance, which has been ratified by more than 50 countries, including Brazil.

In order to achieve all of this, the BRICS should: seek pathways to diversify energy supply sources, including renewable and low carbon energy sources; create mechanisms for attracting investments in energy infrastructure and energy industry; and elaborate strategies for ensuring universal energy access and energy affordability. They might consider participating in the Energy Research Cooperation Platform that was established following the agreement in several signed BRICS declarations. This would contribute to increase cooperation on science and technology; promote the use of new energy technologies; and promote the reform of global energy and environmental governance. Cooperation could also be promoted by a BRICS energy think tank alliance. Another concern raised in the panel was the need to address energy poverty and inequality by increasing access to electricity. This is important and because evidence shows the disproportionate burden of energy poverty on women, as well as a positive correlation between electricity consumption per capita and overall human development index levels. In the case of India, evidence indicates there is also a correlation with other social indicators, such as poverty rate, violent crime and women literacy rate.

Cooperation on Fighting Transnational Crime

Transnational crime has been a central concern for the international community over the last three decades, being now part

“...the NDB is a solid institution, as evaluated by credit rating agencies. This indicates a market-oriented approach of the bank, as well as the BRICS' responsibility towards current international financial regimes.”

of numerous United Nations Conventions, as well as of BRICS agreements and declarations. They include money-laundering, smuggling, drug trafficking, human trafficking, terrorism, among others. As transnational crime is a complex issue, the BRICS countries should use skills and resources from various sources in the fight against crime. They should create a joint commission aimed at expanding cooperation, especially on crime prevention; conflicts of jurisdiction; extradition; joint investigations; intelligence; information and data exchange; protection of witnesses and victims; and training and technical assistance. Rather than using hierarchical structures, this commission should “orchestrate” action by mobilizing various types of actors: government sectors, subnational governments, civil society organisations, universities, among others. In addition, they should design a framework of common terminology and approaches, which could contribute to standardize definitions of types of transnational crime; funding and management issues; and dispute settlement issues.

Terrorism is one of the biggest threats to the world today. BRICS countries should enhance their cooperation in fighting it. They should increase their efforts for the expeditious finalisation and adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The expansion of Internet access has facilitated the expansion of transnational crime. There are various illegal acts that can be conducted through the cyberspace, including terrorism, dissemination of disinformation, sabotage, and espionage. This and the fact that BRICS countries have more than 40% of internet users make cybersecurity a central policy issue.

Regarding intra-BRICS cooperation on cybersecurity, an aspect that is likely to constrain cooperation is technological asymmetry. A more realistic approach would focus in creating capacities to critically consume imported technologies. In addition, there is space for the BRICS to cooperate in the fight against hate speech and dissemination of disinformation. They could contribute to

the formation of networks, mobilizing groups already working with these issues. The BRICS should also work to introduce a science- and health-based approach to fight against drugs use. This would be an alternative to the US-led “war on drugs”, a result from US policies introduced in the 1980s and diffused to the rest of the world.

Agricultural Cooperation

The BRICS countries are in the top 20 in terms of food exports in the world, among which Brazil and China are respectively the third and fifth largest food exporters. In addition, all five countries have strong agriculture research systems, and are

“The BRICS countries are in the top 20 in terms of food exports in the world, among which Brazil and China are respectively the third and fifth largest food exporters.”

working to solve many of the challenges that developing countries face.

One of these problems is undernourishment. Currently, around 11% of people in the world are underfed, a percentage that decreased continuously for many years, but that started to increase in 2015. In the BRICS, although there is overall food security, there are large segments of the population who still suffer from undernutrition, especially in India. Yet, the ‘food problem’ is not a question of whether our planet can provide enough food to feed its growing population, but of whether it can produce food at prices everyone can afford. In addition, the

problem is not only of undernourishment: in Brazil and Russia there are more people who are over nourished than undernourished.

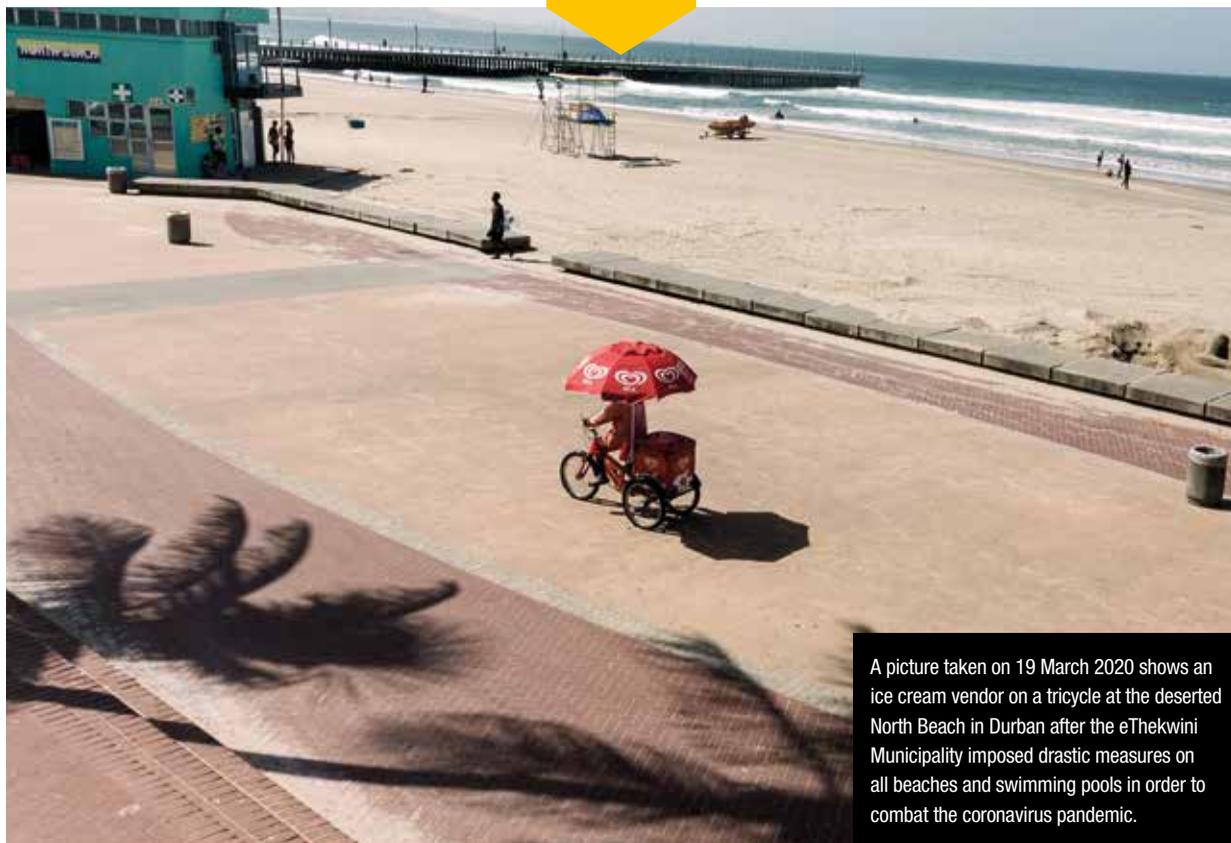
Potential for future cooperation among the BRICS is enormous. Emphasis should be on increasing public and private agricultural investment; protecting small farmers; increasing investment in water infrastructure; using information and communication technology; and promoting climate resilient agriculture. All of this requires large investments in Research and Development, as well as an approach that considers agriculture as an interdisciplinary science encompassing biology, economics and public policy. For example, BRICS countries could research overlapping indigenous knowledge systems to create scientifically validated, value-added products targeting wellness markets. Such an approach could open new markets for farmers to supplement their incomes and help preserve indigenous knowledge. Thus, it is necessary to make agriculture science intensive branch.

One of the obstacles, however, are non-tariff barriers among the BRICS, which have increased since 2009, different from what happened with tariff barriers. This is probably not a coincidence, as the literature indicates an increased use of non-tariff measures to compensate the decreasing use of tariff measures. This problem is important because nontariff measures affect especially agricultural products and developing countries. It is unlikely that agricultural cooperation will advance without a discussion of the role of non-tariff measures in the intra-BRICS trade. This problem could in part be tackled through the creation of the BRICS Agricultural Information Exchange System (BAIES) and BRICS Agricultural Research Platform (ARP), proposed by China in 2012 and India in 2016 respectively. The platform should work to facilitate trade among the BRICS, having a single-window system to process documentation, as well as assist exporters and importers of agricultural products, thereby guaranteeing security and predictability in the agricultural trade. **BR**

Source: <http://www.nkibrics.ru/>

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TOURISM



A picture taken on 19 March 2020 shows an ice cream vendor on a tricycle at the deserted North Beach in Durban after the eThekweni Municipality imposed drastic measures on all beaches and swimming pools in order to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

MMAMOLOKO KUBAYI-NGUBANE

Road to recovery for the tourism sector: The South African perspective



The travel and tourism industry has already suffered the most devastating setbacks since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, yet its full impact on this sector is still unknown.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) estimates that international tourist arrivals could decline by 20% to 30% in 2020. This would translate into a loss of US\$ 300 billion to US\$ 400 billion in international tourism receipts in the worst-case scenario.

Similarly, analysis by the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) shows a sharp escalation in the economic loss to the world economy, up to US\$2.7 trillion of GDP. This will put almost 75 million jobs at risk in G20 countries alone.

It is not hard to predict that in our country, the sector's contribution to the GDP for this year will be very low and that the sector will incur severe job losses. This is because the lockdown which we imposed to contain the spread of the virus curtailed both the supply and the demand side of the tourism market. In essence, the lockdown rendered the tourism sector totally inactive.

However, we must appreciate and applaud the fact that thus far, our efforts to contain Covid-19 have resulted in the slowing of the spread of the virus. At the same time, the need to avoid the loss of jobs and the destruction of livelihoods is a top priority. Thus, there is a need to keep a delicate balance between protecting

people from the Covid-19 virus and avoiding economic devastation.

Accordingly, our government has adopted the Risk Adjustment Approach, which consists of a sequenced, phased-in opening up of key sectors and priority areas while intensify the fight against Covid-19 and rebuilding our economy.

Because the tourism sector thrives on social interaction, it will take longer for businesses in the sector to return to full operation. In the meantime, we need to create mechanisms to protect the most vulnerable segments of the sector such as SMEs, those who are self-employed, women and the youth.

The Tourism Relief Fund, which we introduced to assist small businesses in the sector, has thus far received more than 10 000 applications. This R200 million fund is a once-off assistance package capped at R50 000 per entity and it is aimed at assisting entities to cover fixed costs, operational costs, supplies and other pressure cost items.

Entities in the following categories of the tourism value chain are eligible to apply:

- Accommodation establishments: hotels, lodges, bed and breakfast establishments (B&B's), guest houses and backpackers.
- Hospitality and related services: restaurants (not attached to hotels); conference venues (not attached to hotels), professional catering; attractions.
- Travel and related services: tour operators; travel agents; tourist guiding; car rental companies; and coach operators.

We acknowledge that the fund is not enough. We, therefore encourage businesses in the sector to apply for other relief schemes that have been made available by our government.

Government has introduced a R200 billion loan guarantee scheme in partnership with the major banks, National Treasury and the South African Reserve Bank. The initial phase of this scheme is for companies with a turnover of less than R300 million a year. Since most of the tourism



Minister of Tourism
Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane

businesses fall within this category, we encourage them to utilise this opportunity. This will help them to reduce the burden of operational costs, such as salaries, rent and the payment of suppliers.

We have also been working in close collaboration with the Department of Labour and Employment, labour formations and the Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) to expedite Unemployment Insurance Fund applications for tourism businesses. So far, we have received more than 25 000 applications and we believe this will also assist in saving jobs in the sector.

While it is important to support the sector so that it can weather the storm, there is also a need to start planning for

“However, we must appreciate and applaud the fact that thus far, our efforts to contain Covid-19 have resulted in the slowing the spread of the virus.”



Belinda Scott, Durban's deputy mayor, and Nomusa Dube-Ncube, MEC in KwaZulu-Natal for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, hand over sanitisers, masks and sanitary packs in Umlazi township on 9 April 2020 in Durban, South Africa.

“The global nature of the pandemic means that the measures to curb the spread, such as travel restrictions and border closures, have been imposed worldwide.”

the recovery of the sector in the post-Covid-19 period. The global nature of the pandemic means that the measures to curb the spread of Covid-19, such as travel restrictions and border closures, have been imposed worldwide. This means that any recovery planning that is not in line with a globally coordinated

effort will be a futile exercise.

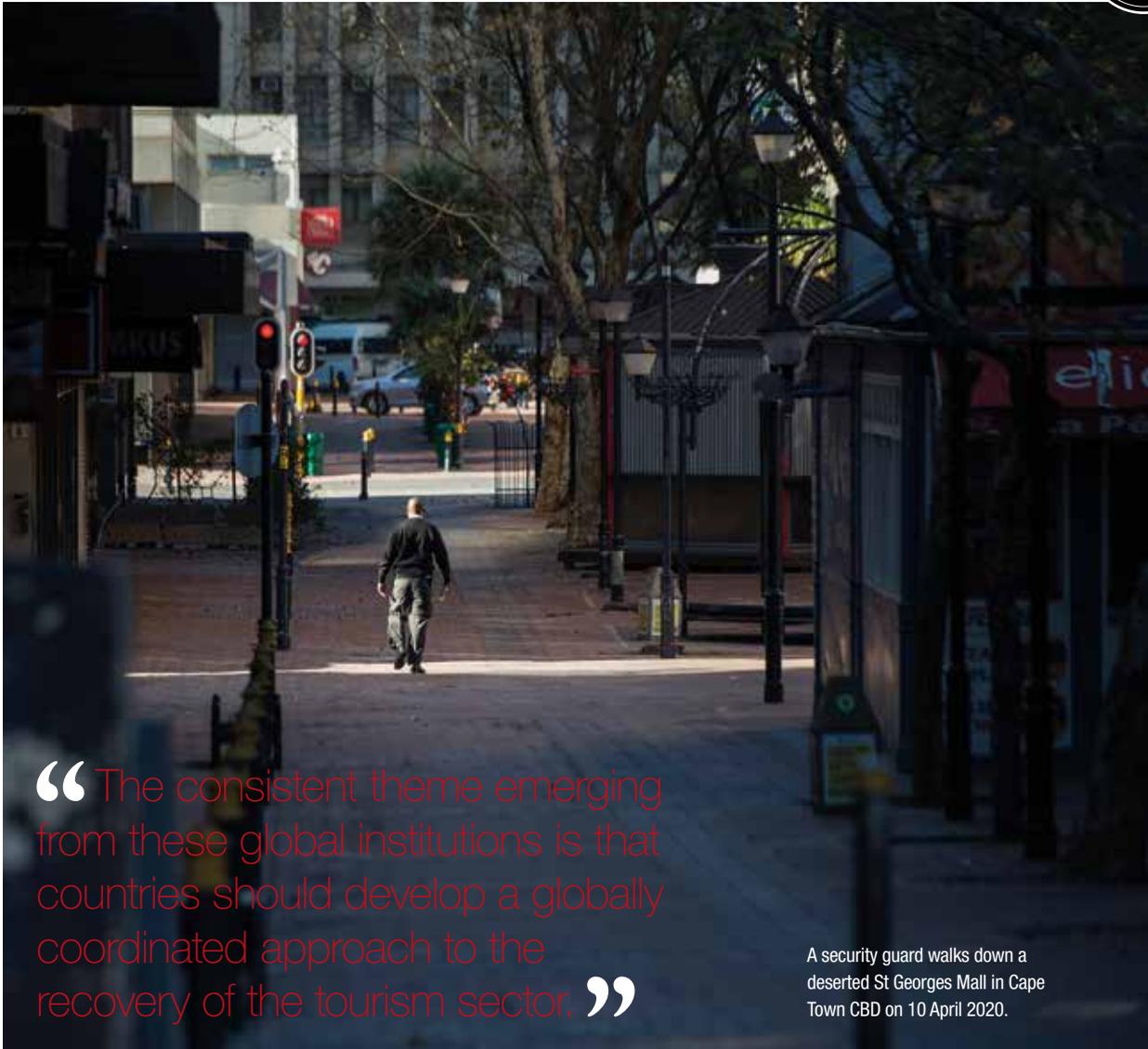
Regarding global coordination, we have participated in conferences and engagements with global institutions such as the African Union, the G20 ministerial meeting, the UNWTO and the WTTC to look at how we can develop a global approach to the recovery of the tourism sector. The AU convened the first meeting of the Bureau of the Subcommittee on Tourism for the Specialised Technical Committee on Transport, Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructure, Energy and Tourism (STC-TTIET) on 21 April 2020. The purpose of the meeting was to exchange ideas on a response and recovery plan for tourism in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic.

On 14 April, the UNWTO convened a virtual conference on Policies for Inclusive Recovery in Global Tourism, in collaboration with the Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth. The conference provided a platform to discuss how governments, institutions and companies can protect vulnerable populations during the Covid-19 outbreak. The meeting also discussed

measures that countries can put in place to accelerate their recovery.

The G20 Presidency (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) convened a Tourism Ministers' Virtual Meeting on 24 April. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the tourism sector's response to the Covid-19 pandemic as well as to formulate a recovery plan supporting the long-term resilience of the sector. Specifically, the meeting was aimed at facilitating collaborative action to protect tourism businesses and jobs, and to support visitors throughout the outbreak. Given that the tourism sector will play a crucial role in economic recovery, the G20 Tourism Ministers Meeting provided a platform to reinforce global cooperation with other international organisations in order to mitigate the impact of the pandemic and lay the foundation to accelerate recovery.

For its part, the WTTC has proposed to G20 tourism ministers to "... fully jointly commit with the private sector to four key principles to achieve a faster recovery. This would involve including the private sector in the coordinated response, ensuring all measures put the



“The consistent theme emerging from these global institutions is that countries should develop a globally coordinated approach to the recovery of the tourism sector.”

A security guard walks down a deserted St Georges Mall in Cape Town CBD on 10 April 2020.

traveller at the heart of their actions. This would include a seamless traveller journey with enhanced health security standards enabled through technology, developing joint public-private and G20-wide health protocols, as well as ongoing support packages for the tourism sector beyond lifting of lockdown and into the recovery.”

The consistent theme emerging from these global institutions is that countries should develop a globally coordinated approach to the recovery of the tourism sector. Additionally, countries are encouraged to commit to supporting the sector during the

crisis to save businesses and jobs, developing a framework to advance sustainable tourism, investing in market intelligence systems and digital transformation, and developing a governance framework for tourism at all levels.

In the end, each country is expected to develop its own recovery plan that is informed by the prevailing conditions in that particular country. Based on the Covid-19 pandemic’s expected trajectory in South Africa, the best-case scenario is that the tourism sector’s recovery will only begin, in earnest, towards the end of this year. The first

phase of the recovery will be driven by domestic tourism followed by regional tourism. International tourism will only start coming into operation next year.

The Risk Adjusted Approach gives us a framework within which we can carve out a path towards recovery for the tourism sector in South Africa. Working in collaboration with the private sector, we are developing a recovery plan that will form a launch-pad for the tourism recovery efforts in South Africa. We are confident that the sector will overcome the current challenges and emerge even stronger in the post-Covid-19 period. **BR**

VIEWPOINT

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PROFESSOR WILLIAM GUMEDE

The case for IBSA's relevance



Before the rise of the five-member bloc of emerging economies known as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), there was an alliance between India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA). It promised to align the globe's largest developing country democracies across continents so as to trade with one another; to oppose the dominance by industrial countries regarding global trade as well as rules, ideas and institutions; and to share their respective development experiences.

IBSA was established in 2003. BRICS was established in 2009 by China, Russia, India and Brazil, with South Africa joining in 2010. IBSA has operated under the shadow of BRICS, with meetings by this alliance having been somewhat low-key affairs in recent times compared to the fanfare that accompanies BRICS meetings.

IBSA was established after India, Brazil and South Africa had been invited as observers to the 2003 Group of 8 (G8) summit of industrial countries in France (the G8 has, since 2014, been operating as the G7, following the suspension of Russia). The three IBSA countries left the summit feeling that their fate, and that of the rest of the developing world, was being decided by a small group of unrepresentative developed countries.

Following the meeting, the three countries decided to formally club together in order to push for a bigger say when it came to global governance

for developing countries. They also wanted to diversify their trade away from industrial countries and to share their unique lessons regarding the twin pursuits of development and democracy amidst multicultural societies characterised by deep levels of poverty and inequality.

Multi-ethnic societies pursuing democracy and development

Brazil, India and South Africa are the globe's leading developing multi-ethnic democracies. The promise of the IBSA alliance, was for these countries to not only push for fair global trade, institutions and rules, but to also ensure that this was done in a democratic manner.

Within their domestic spheres, all three IBSA countries are attempting to pursue both development and democracy. Hence, IBSA is a formal alliance of like-minded developing countries facing similar developmental, inequality and multicultural challenges, but wanting to resolve this by building viable democracies.

BRICS is pushing for a bigger say for developing countries in matters relating to global trade, institutions and rules – but not in matters relating to global democracy. China is a one-party state pursuing state capitalism, offering little freedom to its people. Russia is a one-party, one-leader dominant state pursuing state capitalism, offering controlled freedom to its people.

Both China and Russia are trying to show that development is possible without democracy. The mix of non-democracies and democracies within BRICS has been one of the reasons for the BRICS grouping's lack of cohesion.

In 2007, leaders from the IBSA countries mooted a plan to connect the markets of their respective countries in order to bring together the world's largest developing free trade area. The proposal was for a Comprehensive Economic

Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the regional customs unions aligned to South Africa and Brazil, and India.

Although that goal was never realised, the new free trade area between South Africa and the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and Mercosur, the Latin American regional grouping with Brazil at its centre, which came into effect last year, was a partial outcome of that early ambition.

In 2005, the IBSA countries agreed to make an annual contribution of US\$1 million to an IBSA fund, which would be used to help developing countries. The fund has been operational since 2006 and is currently managed by the UN Development Programme's office for South-South co-operation. The fund, called the IBSA Fund for the Alleviation of Poverty and Hunger, has become the most active co-operation mechanism between the countries.

To date, the IBSA Fund has approved 27 projects in 21 developing countries. Some of the projects funded include strengthening rice production in Vietnam, helping people with disabilities in Cambodia, building a hospital in Palestine and improving solid waste collection in Haiti.

Criteria for granting development support include the following: that there be knowledge sharing among developing countries, that developing countries' own experts and institutions are used, that the capacity of the beneficiaries are boosted, and that projects have built-in long-term sustainability.

IBSA's democratic institutions

There is no regional or global alliance of developing countries that specifically aims to promote democracy and development – making IBSA unique. Just like international forums such as the G20 and G7, IBSA established formal mechanisms for non-state organisations, such as civil society organisations – including the media – to influence the group's decision-making. Channels for independent civil

society organisations to influence BRICS are absent.

In 2015, South Africa's Department of International Relations and Co-operation established the South African Council on International Relations (SACOIR), where civil society, organised labour, business and academia are represented in order to help shape the country's foreign policy.

Brazil has structured democratic channels for civil society involvement in foreign policy. The country has a Committee on Foreign Policy and Human Rights, which pushes for transparency regarding government's international relations policies and practices. The committee holds public hearings in Brazil's Congress, reviews the country's positioning in the Human Rights Council and pushes for information about the government's foreign policy decisions to be made publicly available.

Although India does not have structured mechanisms for civil society to influence foreign policy, the country's civil society organisations are robust and hold the government to account for its foreign policy decisions. These organisations work hard at shaping official policy by arranging public debates and protesting against corruption.

The media and civil organisations in these countries must collaborate with each other to better expose corruption, to hold government and business accountable, and

“ Civil society must play a greater role in monitoring the sustainability, inclusivity and community participation in projects of the IBSA Fund. ”



India's former prime minister Manmohan Singh (L), South Africa's former president Thabo Mbeki (C) and Brazil's former president Lula Da Silva (R) shake hands on 17 October 2007, at their first meeting of the IBSA summit at the presidential guesthouse in Pretoria.

to share their experiences of democracy, development and nation-building.

Civil society must play a greater role in monitoring the sustainability, inclusivity and community participation in projects of the IBSA Fund. Civil society organisations in IBSA countries must push to make it mandatory that their respective parliaments approve foreign loans for infrastructure. This is not a current requirement in any of the three IBSA countries. They must also push for domestic investment protocols that ensure their countries' public and private companies adhere to ecologically sustainable, consultative and honest corporate behaviour when investing in foreign countries.

Strengthening co-operation between IBSA members

IBSA could continue, but as a space to share lessons with regard to building democracy and development in multicultural societies with high levels of poverty and inequality. Each country can learn from what the other has done right or wrong in their land reform, affirmative action and empowerment programmes.

There also needs to be a greater people-to-people exchange between these countries, and a greater sharing of both democratic development lessons and nation-building lessons.

India, South Africa and Brazil must collaborate to increase the scope of

ideas available to them for implementing independent policies. They must also co-operate to make the global political, economic and trade policies and institutions more equitable for developing countries.

The three countries can diversify their trade away from industrial countries by trading more with each other. IBSA countries could create a complementary market between them (as suggested by Lakshmi Puri in her paper titled *IBSA: An Emerging Trinity in the New Geography of International Trade*, 2007). Such an IBSA market would be based on one country selling to another what that country needs, and vice versa. They could import commodities they currently source from industrial countries, from each other. In addition, each country can become part of the value chains of the other's manufacturing and services production chains, where complementary.

“India and South Africa can source competitive agricultural products and ethanol, construction materials and vehicle parts from Brazil, while Brazil and South Africa can source competitive pharmaceuticals and IT-enabled services from India,” writes Puri. “Similarly, Brazil and India, in turn, can source competitively certain minerals and metals from South Africa.”

Developing countries struggle to secure technology from industrial countries. They can collaborate on technology exchange: one country can transfer technology in

“IBSA members could also assist each other in combating epidemics by sharing expertise, lessons learned and medical equipment.”

which it has expertise to another that lacks it. Developmental and democracy models from industrial countries are often inappropriate for developing countries. The IBSA countries can share their unique lessons of the twin pursuits of development and democracy amidst multicultural societies with deep levels of poverty and inequality.

Research and development (R&D), crucial for the development of new technology, is concentrated in industrial countries. The three countries must encourage greater co-research, co-knowledge creation and co-ideas fostering. There has to be greater collaboration between the universities and the research and policy institutions of the IBSA countries. There is also a need for greater people-to-people exchange between these countries. The three countries must co-operate more strategically to push for a bigger say in global governance for developing countries by campaigning for fair global trade, institutions and rules – but also for democratic ones.

Climate change is increasingly affecting all three countries. A study by researchers at Stanford University in California showed that the Indian economy is 31% smaller because of the impact of climate change. The country has seen frequent droughts, unseasonable rains and cyclones. In Brazil, extreme weather, unpredictable seasons and uncontrolled fires have reduced agricultural output, increased fungal diseases and pests, and reduced biodiversity. Rising deforestation of the Amazon is also changing global weather patterns.

Cape Town received its lowest rainfall in recorded history between 2015 and 2017, leading to water shortages and rationing, and sparking fears that the South African city would run out of water.

Droughts, floods and unseasonal weather are now becoming commonplace in South Africa. Climate change has increased desertification and waterborne diseases such as cholera, and has undermined agricultural production. IBSA countries could collaborate on efforts to combat climate change by sharing good practices and partnering in global climate negotiations. They could also partner in sharing disaster management best practices, capacity and skills.

IBSA members could join forces, and in a similar way to the European Union, take on global technology giants such as Amazon, Google, Apple and Facebook, which appear too powerful to be disciplined by individual countries. In 2019, the EU fined Google more than US\$1.7 billion for “abusive practices” under anti-trust laws – practices such as abusing its market dominance by limiting or preventing rivals from working with companies that had contracts with Google. Google controls 93% of the global Internet search engine market.

In 2019, the EU started investigations into Amazon, probing whether it was abusing its double role as a retailer selling its products and operating as a market where other companies sell their products, by using third party data to promote its own products at the expense of other retailers. The previous year, the EU fined Amazon US\$295 million over outstanding taxes owed to Luxembourg. If IBSA countries partnered up, they would be in a better position to discipline global technology giants for uncompetitive behaviour or failure to pay taxes, than if they acted on their own.

IBSA members could also assist each other in combating epidemics by sharing expertise, lessons learned and medical

equipment. The global outbreak of the Covid-19 coronavirus in 2020 was a missed opportunity for IBSA and BRICS members to co-operate to jointly tackle the spread of the virus in individual countries. The EU instructed its medical companies not to export medical equipment to countries outside the EU as the pandemic took over the region. India did the same. China sent masks and ventilators to select industrial and developing countries.

IBSA within BRICS

The big question now is whether IBSA remains relevant. If so, what should be the new role of this organisation, given the prominence of BRICS? The two key reasons for IBSA's existence are, firstly, bringing together multi-ethnic developing countries pursuing both democracy and development; and secondly, for IBSA countries to not only push for fair global trade, institutions and rules, but also for democratic ones.

These reasons remain relevant. However, what has been lacking is a more defined role for IBSA now that BRICS has been established. Within BRICS, IBSA could be a formal caucus pushing for participatory decision-making, ecological sustainability and democratic development. This means that IBSA would be a democratic lobby within BRICS itself.

The bottom line is that IBSA countries should continue to push for global democracy, country equality and ecologically sustainable development in international trade, even within the BRICS alliance. Furthermore, the three countries must continue at a global level to campaign not only for developing countries to have a greater say in global governance, but also for increased democracy within global institutions, rules and country behaviour.

IBSA should form pro-democracy strategic alliances within global institutions such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organisation and World Bank not only to reform these institutions, but also to ensure that these institutions adopt inclusive policies, have participatory decision-making processes in place and appoint globally diverse personnel. IBSA countries could, through their democratic positioning, also influence both BRICS and the global agenda to adopt more democratic priorities. **BR**

01

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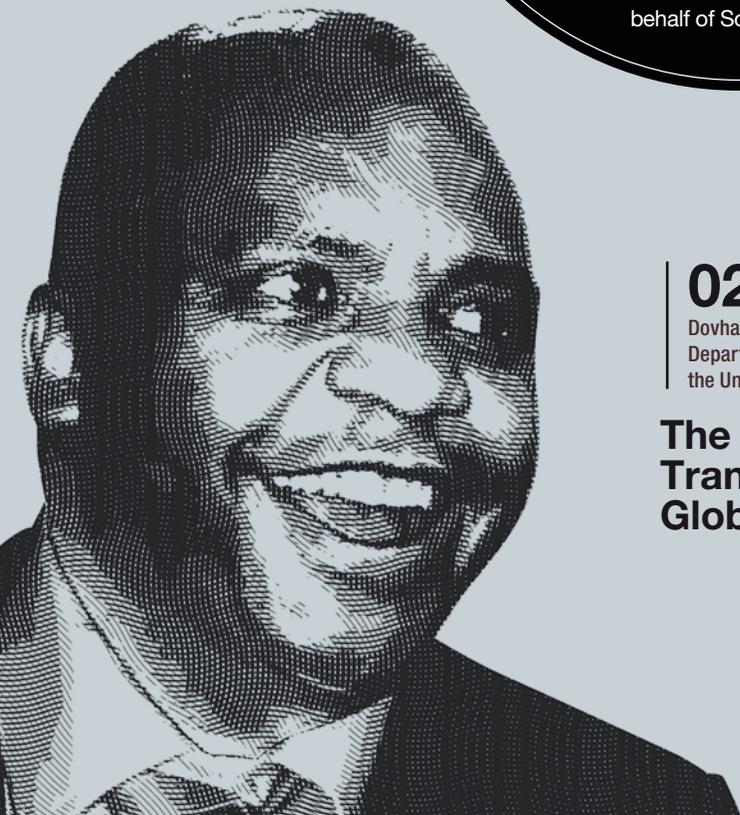
BRICS' New Industrial Development Path for the Digital Economy: How Africa Can Benefit



02 ESSAYS

Prof Thakathi and Mr Patel are respective members in the Research Academic – Ethics and Governance and ICT Clusters of the South African BRICS Think Tank (SABTT).

The academic think tank acts as a dynamic broker between the worlds of knowledge, policy development and policy action on behalf of South Africa.



02

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The Role of BRICS Countries in Transforming the Rules of the Global Economic and Trade System



01



The BRICS group of nations was formed in 2010 with a view to promoting closer economic, political, developmental, and peace and security objectives in a multi-polar world, holding annual summits at various levels. Overall, the bloc is aligned to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals, a collection of 17 goals that form part of UN Resolution 70/1: Transforming our World – the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The resolution sets out a clear agenda for global sustainability. Spearheaded by the UN through a deliberative process involving its 193 member states as well as global civil society, the goals are almost a blueprint of the outcome document, titled *The Future We Want*.

In this context, the BRICS Academic Forum, held in Brasilia, the capital of Brazil, in 2019 – along with the Wanshou Forum in China, co-hosted by Fudan University and the University of São Paulo – was timely and relevant.

At a time when the world has been gripped by the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic, when the model of neoliberal capitalism is in rapid decline, alternatives are gaining traction. These alternatives include the developmental state model of some BRICS nations, along with the success evidenced by the new digital industrial development path. These are gaining rapid traction in terms of addressing fundamental development and economic challenges facing the Developing South.

Overview of economic and industrialisation pathways in Sub-Saharan Africa

With discourse about the fourth industrial revolution (4IR) having gone mainstream via the World Economic Forum, many core global platforms have joined in to also address the digital economy. These include:

BRICS's New Industrial Development Path for the Digital Economy: How Africa Can Benefit

By Asbraf Patel, a digital economy and development associate at the Institute for Global Dialogue and the South African BRICS Think Tank

- World Economic Forum Industry 4.0
- The G20 digital economy task team
- BRICS new industrial development and 4IR
- African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) digital trade
- The European Union's (EU) digital competition and innovation programmes

Each global region and platform has a different focus and set of priorities when it comes to the application of information and communications technology (ICT), big data and the data economy in a complex, globalised world. In many ways, new digital contestations are emerging, pitting the US free-market model against China's developmental state-led model and the EU's consumer social market model.

This rings true in the midst of the robust electronic commerce (e-commerce) negotiations that are currently under way between the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and 80 countries. The treaty is one of the most contested since the Doha Development Round, which began in November 2001 with the aim of lowering trade barriers around the world, and thereby facilitating increased global trade. What's at stake is the very structure of national, regional and local economies.

This is because e-commerce is not merely about web-based, online commerce; it affects the structure of national economies, such as taxation, trade, labour, agriculture, innovation, data ownership and local value chains, and could have a potential negative effect on millions of small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs).

Let us take a look at the varying perspectives:

USA: The American model, which espouses free markets and unfettered, borderless trade, is the USA's historic and current

strategy. This is not surprising, given that tech giant Amazon is the e-commerce leader when it comes to driving the global value chain and its ownership of hundreds of millions of global customer datasets, which are valuable for its business model. Other major global tech firms such as Microsoft, Apple, Google, Facebook, Netflix and Uber – moulded in accordance with Silicon Valley’s venture capitalism business model – are built on the monetisation of their customers’ personal data and on so-called “ad tech”. Given that customers are based all over the world, and the borderless trade that ensues, the data markets in which these tech giants operate are fundamentally unregulated. Boosted by the federal tax breaks passed by US President Donald Trump’s administration in 2017 – constituting the largest federal tax breaks in US corporate history – these firms are scouring the planet for more markets, more datasets and, of course, minimal taxation.

China: China’s entry into the WTO in 1996 was a key milestone. Its state-led development planning economic model has reaped massive benefits in international trade over the past two decades, earning the country the tagline “factory of the world”. Trillions of dollars in trade surpluses have resulted, pushing China’s national GDP figures on par with those of the US and the EU. Having achieved its UN millennium development goals, China is now concentrating on investing in innovation systems, in successful national industrial policy models, and in a unique national digital ecosystem that has propelled tech champions such as Alibaba, Tencent and Huawei to global heights. These three tech firms have morphed into global multinational corporations. China is on track for industrialised nation status, and to this end, is creatively leveraging its state-led model as an example of success in presenting both opportunities and challenges for the Global South.

EU: The EU model proposes a social market strategy with strong consumer trust legislation. This is borne out of the EU’s GDPR policy regulating data protection and privacy, and its experience with strong competition regulation. The European Competition Commission is world-renowned for the rulings and fines it has imposed in various legal cases involving US tech giants operating in the EU’s jurisdiction. Its approach generally embraces the power of the market and big business – in line with European Commission

“ At a time when the world has been gripped by the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic, when the model of neoliberal capitalism is in rapid decline, alternatives are gaining traction. ”

support for strong innovation frameworks and for preserving cultural heritage in the audio-visual space. It also espouses fair competition in jurisdictions, modest data localisation, the protection of intellectual property rights, e-signatures, etc. All this within a solid strong consumer data protection framework, aligned to the social clauses of the EU Charter. It appears to be endorsing a hybrid model for updated “special and differential treatment” provisions within the General Agreement on Trade in Services (which gives developing countries special rights). It also seems to endorse more intensive capacity support for Trade Facilitation Agreements for least developed countries in an effort to preserve some semblance of developmental aid support.

Developing South: India, Kenya, South Africa, Mexico, etc – The Developing South members, many of which are part of the original Group of 77, or G77 (now the G90) that successfully negotiated at the WTO on special and differential treatments – are concerned at the pace and even the relevance of the e-commerce negotiations. (The G90 is an alliance between the poorest and smallest developing countries, many of which are part of the WTO.) Led by India and other nations, the group’s position is one of caution and deep concern over key elements, especially with regard to data localisation vis-à-vis national industries; high-tech e-commerce standards as trade barriers; and the need for the



protection of millions of local SMMEs, small-scale farmers, national tech champions and agriculture value chains, so vital for huge markets.

The group's approach is couched within a broader Global South discourse that brings with it echoes of the G77 alliance that achieved success at the WTO Seattle Round of trade negotiations in 1999. However, with a rapidly globalised digital economy and varying interests even within the Global South, coupled with the soft power of "developmental aid" that many least developed countries face, this position, while morally strong, is under pressure.

Key challenges facing the Developing South and disruptions by 4IR and the digital economy

The current neoliberal model is experiencing tech-centric economic, social and workplace change and disruption. With the rapid rise of micro-workers (professional workers without formal employment) comes a new "precariat class" which, combined with the concomitant mass layoffs in the manufacturing industry, has created a duality of vulnerable workers: the industrial proletariat and the precariat.

In 2016, the WEF wrote: "New Schumpeterian modes of technology disruption have again created new waves of opportunity – via instability. The rise of Uber aptly symbolises this new wave of disruptive business models, monetisation of new apps, micro-grids and new technological waves. These have major implications for economies, with potential for mega wealth creation; but also disrupting standard, everyday modes of life and work as we know it."

Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee, leading economists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, posit that 4IR "could yield greater inequality, particularly in its potential to disrupt labour markets".

"As automation substitutes for labour across the entire economy, the net displacement of workers by machines might exacerbate the gap between returns to capital and returns to labour," they continue. "On the other hand, it is also possible that the displacement of workers by technology will, on aggregate, result in a net increase in safe jobs. We cannot foresee at this point which scenario is likely to emerge, and history suggests that the outcome is likely to be some combination of the two."

It is in this milieu that a carefully planned industrial and Human Resource Development (HRD) skills policy should be crafted and calibrated to ensure a just transition into the fourth

industrial economy, advocates the WEF.

"Technology is therefore one of the main reasons why incomes have stagnated, or even decreased, for a majority of the population in high-income countries: the demand for highly skilled workers has increased, while the demand for workers with less education and lower skills has decreased. The result is a job market with a strong demand at the high and low ends, but a hollowing out of the middle. This helps explain why so many workers are disillusioned and fearful that their own real incomes and those of their children will continue to stagnate. It also helps explain why middle classes around the world are increasingly experiencing a pervasive sense of dissatisfaction and unfairness." (WEF, 2016)

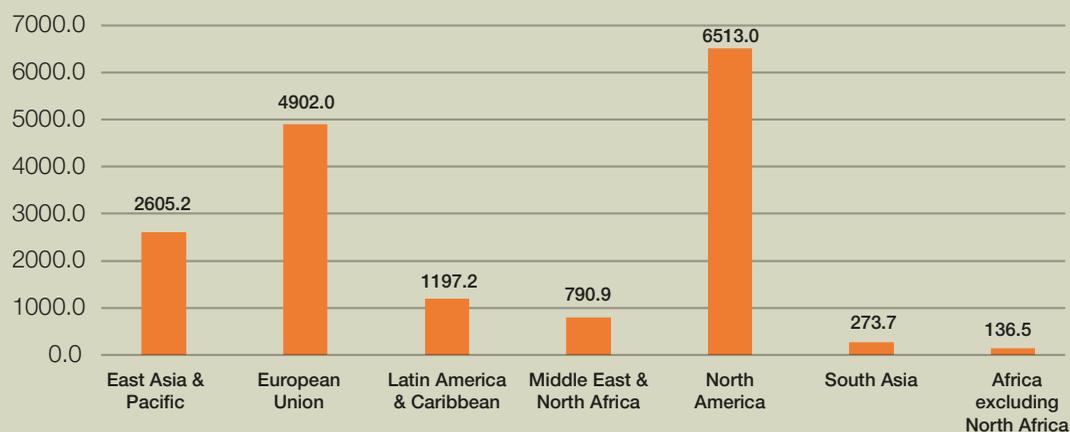
Professor Antonio Andreoni is a senior lecturer in economics at public research university the SOAS University of London, and an industrial policy academic. He explains that "as a result of these structural differences, industrial policies in developing countries such as China, Brazil and South Africa have faced a number of challenges, including the creation of completely new sectors (eg sectoral policies), the absorption and development of technologies, and the achievement of certain product quality standards (e.g. technology, trade and standardisation policies). In contrast, industrialised economies have relied on different policy measures in response to the dramatic transformations in the global manufacturing landscape beginning in the mid-1990s, and the "manufacturing loss" experienced during the global financial crisis."

Economic development results from structural change in the economy that shifts labour from low-productivity activities (such as traditional agriculture) towards activities that have higher productivity levels. This indispensable process, at the heart of economic catch-up, is not as simple as it sounds. "Successful" structural change involves not only diversifying activities, but also adopting and adapting existing technologies and climbing the technology ladder by continuously upgrading production structures in key sectors of manufacturing and services, with smart investment in HRD. This is a long and winding path; it is not simply about leapfrogging magically into the 4IR.

BRICS development co-operation and enabling a new industrial development in Africa

The story of Africa is one of de-industrialisation overall, with the share of manufacturing in GDP hovering around

Manufacturing Value Added per capita, 2017



Data for Middle East & North Africa and North America are of 2016. The rest are data of 2017

10% for most countries, while falling in some (Banga and Te Velde, 2018). The contrast with East Asia, which is often cited as a development model for Africa, could not be starker. Manufacturing value-add in East Asia and developing Asia is much higher than in Africa. The Chinese new industrial development model can be modified and enable many African nations to choose a path of industrialisation. According to Dani Rodrik, an economist at Harvard University, the rapid transitional move into services – often skipping the manufacturing sector – is leading to unbalanced structural transformation. For instance, mass usage of mobile communications and apps can create an illusion of tech modernisation, but without a solid manufacturing and industrial base, which is the heartbeat of job creation, it can deepen existing inequalities. Moreover, industrial activities and manufacturing value-add in Africa are generally concentrated in the North African region and in South Africa.

For the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa, the traditional industries – agriculture and mining – are still trapped in unequal global trading systems and unstable commodity cycles. Many nations would need to add value through the beneficiation of minerals and create some semblance of a modern industrial base that can add value to global value chains, and thus create wealth. For instance, South Africa’s national system of innovation and

R&D strategy is a good example of funding innovation and providing companies with innovation support packages to improve competitiveness and development.

The digitalised economy is shaping the landscape for development opportunities around the world. In order to achieve Agenda 2063 – Africa’s master plan for transforming the continent into the global powerhouse of the future – and the worldwide Sustainable Development Goals on expanding employment, decreasing inequality and eradicating poverty, millions of new jobs must be created.

The upcoming BRICS 2020 Summit – to be held in Russia in July – will rely heavily on the input of the academic community, namely the BRICS Think Tanks. The chapters in Beijing and Moscow held their first planning meetings in early January 2020. Russia will further promote the activities of the BRICS Network University (a network of the BRICS member countries’ higher education institutions engaged in co-operation) and expand contacts between academic and scientific centres, research institutions and universities in the five-member states. BRICS academics firmly believe that their work will offer much-needed guidance on the future progress of the group and help the five leaders to stand at the forefront of international decision-making.

Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank, 2019

02



The Role of BRICS Countries in Transforming the Rules of the Global Economic and Trade System

By Dovhani Thakathi, a professor in the Department of Public Administration at the University of Fort Hare

In the preamble of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) White Paper, our first democratic president, Nelson Mandela, said: “Our people have elected us because they want change. Change is what they will get. Our people have high expectations which are legitimate. While the government cannot meet all these needs overnight, we must put firmly into place the concrete goals, time frames and strategies to achieve this change.”

These are the powerful words of the late iconic statesman. BRICS countries must learn from Tata Nelson Mandela and put clear objectives in place with regard to reshaping the global economic and trade rules and system.

Nitin Desai, an economist and the former Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, said: “It is increasingly being acknowledged that the state is a good key actor in the development process. It has a major role to play in making globalisation work for all, in alleviating poverty and income inequality, in advancing human rights and democracy, in protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development, and in managing violent conflict and combating international crime. Public Administration has a vital role to play in the quest for peace, greater freedom, social equity and sustainable development.”

BRICS countries must influence the global system well. They must be proactive and ensure that global transformation takes place in a fair and equitable manner.

In his speech at the official opening of Parliament in 1999, then-president Thabo Mbeki emphasised the importance of, and the need for, accelerating

service delivery and transformation by all government departments and other state organs. He called for the extensive exploration of new and innovative mechanisms by government departments to deliver effective, efficient economic and other services to citizens. The BRICS countries must become innovative and creative in changing policies so as to transform the world.

The transformation of the global economic and trade system must start first with BRICS countries before going global. The BRICS bloc must ensure that its own system brings about change and transformation among its members.

What is transformation?

According to Brazilian educationist Paulo Freire, “transformation is only valid if it is carried out with the people, not for them. Liberation is like childbirth and is a painful one. The person who emerges is a new person, no longer an oppressor or oppressed, but a person in the process of achieving freedom.”

The transformation agenda of BRICS must improve service delivery at all levels within the bloc’s member states, structures and offices. These five nations must develop policies that drive transformation in the whole world and provide the capacity to implement those policies. BRICS countries must establish and influence a positive environment for economic and trade policies.

The vision and mission of BRICS must be clear. What is important is the will and the commitment of its leaders to drive and champion those transformation goals and objectives, especially for fighting poverty, unemployment and inequality globally. These leaders must influence

economic freedom and free trade to make the world a better place for all.

The BRICS countries should be united in their search for economic service excellence and effective service delivery, good governance, professionalism, accountability, equity, and effective administration and management. In accelerating economic transformation and the trade rules, BRICS needs leaders who are visionary, caring and capable.

How can BRICS countries accelerate economic and trade transformation?

1 Going back to the basics

- Implementation of policies that stimulate economic growth.
- Implementation of equitable and fair principles.
- Revisiting and revising the economic and trade policies.
- Communicating BRICS plans and programmes effectively.
- Creating a positive climate and a new culture of excellence among the global community.
- Enhancing the development of Local Economic Development and trade policies.

“BRICS countries must learn from Tata Nelson Mandela and put clear objectives in place with regard to reshaping the global economic and trade rules and system.”

2 Translating BRICS strategic plans into implementation plans

- Crafting BRICS strategic plans into operational plans for implementation by the global community.
- Engaging all the key international strategic alliances and role-players.
- Improving co-ordination and implementation of transformation policies by BRICS' co-ordination body.
- The involvement of all BRICS members, from those in the frontlines to those at the top.

3 Moving from tradition to innovation and creativity

- Inculcating a sense of commitment and pride in all BRICS member states.
- Introducing a sense of care for all the members of BRICS.
- BRICS must always be geared for presenting prompt results and responses to all its members.
- Making the BRICS community a performance-driven organisation.
- Developing capacity for high standards of performance and high processing of activities within BRICS architecture.
- Establishment of high-calibre BRICS leadership and top management that is transformative and flexible.

4 Turning the BRICS bloc into a learning organisation

- BRICS must introduce a culture of research and studies.
- BRICS must accelerate the establishment of learning networks, both administrative and academic, within all its member states.
- BRICS must harness intellectual debates and discussions among its members.
- BRICS must make economic and trade initiatives core elements of all BRICS programmes and plans.
- BRICS must open doors for learning in the sector to promote productivity, efficiency and excellence.
- BRICS must have the learning teams, U-turn groups, quality circles, think tanks and work improvement teams to work at optimum level.



- BRICS must have structures that should co-ordinate training, education, research, development and learning programmes.
- BRICS must promote the effective utilisation of skills and knowledge available in each of its member-states.
- BRICS must promote the regular sharing of knowledge, benchmarking and best practices inside and outside each of its member countries.
- BRICS must learn from its counterparts across the globe.

5 Moving from isolation to synergy

- Promote an understanding of the BRICS vision and mission when it comes to economics and trade.
- Encourage the exchange of staff and study visits among university staff and students with other partners and alliances.
- Organise regular meetings of clustered BRICS at all levels.
- Encourage teamwork, task teams and focus groups to deal with weakest links in the entire BRICS community.
- Strengthen the relations among BRICS member universities and other educational institutions.
- Promote BRICS members to effective participation in African regional institutions and other international organisations.

6 Doing the spring-cleaning

- Root out corruption anywhere among the BRICS members.
- Remove negative influences and encourage peace among BRICS members and the entire world.
- Deal with all the risk areas effectively among the BRICS community.
- Deal with any delays in economics and trade effectively.
- Remove all the stumbling blocks on economic and trade affairs among the BRICS community.

The role of BRICS political leaders and top managers

- Building capacity for strategic thinking, effective leadership and management.
- Facilitating synergy and co-operation within the global community for the achievement of government goals and objectives.
- Leading and managing their human resources well.
- Focusing on strategic issues and coming up with strategies to enhance service delivery and the transformation agenda.
- Creating an internal capacity to carry out the strategic initiatives and other mechanisms for speedy response to BRICS policies and programmes.
- Setting up of strategic evaluation and monitoring mechanisms to ensure that the world is moving in the right direction.
- Introducing new ways of working and creating structures that talk to each other in implementing policies and programmes.
- Creating an organisational culture that promotes excellence, unity and teamwork.
- Promoting talent management and encouraging the strength of BRICS countries.
- Promoting organisational rebirth and renewal to bring in new energy and drive in order to reach economic and trade goals and objectives.

Techniques to promote transformation of the economic and trade system among the BRICS community

The following could assist BRICS countries to accelerate transformation:

- Use of the project management technique
- Action research
- Organisational development
- Work groups
- Organisational learning
- Balanced scorecard
- Kaizen technique (continuous improvement)
- HRD interventions
- Work improvement teams
- Quality circles

Moving from bureaucracy to revocracy for all BRICS members

- Revocrats initiate change to improve service delivery, but bureaucrats resist change and stifle progress.
- Revocrats are driven by change and transformation, but bureaucrats are driven by desks and rules.
- Revocrats are passionate about their work and challenges, but bureaucrats find pleasure in officialdom and status.
- Revocrats are results-orientated, but bureaucrats are position-conscious and very fond of lines of authority.
- Revocrats are quick to deal with issues, but bureaucrats like long and winding procedures to delay the issues.
- Revocrats make things happen, but bureaucrats watch things happening and try to block them.
- Revocrats are activists who are committed to progress and action, but bureaucrats are full of delays and excuses.
- The revocrat attitude is: “One of the best ways to save time is to think and plan ahead: Five minutes of thinking can often save an hour of work.” Be a revocrat who can think and plan strategically.

Conclusion

BRICS must play a crucial role in transforming the global economic and trade rules, making them user-friendly for the global community. BRICS can heed the advice of Russia’s President Vladimir Putin, who addressed delegates at the fifth annual BRICS Summit, held in Durban, in 2013. He said: “In Africa, people talk about the Big Five – the five biggest animals on the African continent. BRICS is also made up of five countries and we make a very visible contribution to the global economy.”

Indeed, BRICS members are big. A policy on transformation remains our pillar of strength and a strong foundation to drive the service delivery agenda effectively.

BRICS countries must all strive for professional excellence and encourage the professional development of those associated with the bloc and those seeking to enter the BRICS community.

BRICS must affirm the dignity and value of the services it renders.

“BRICS countries must influence the global system well. They must be proactive and ensure that global transformation takes place in a fair and equitable manner.”

I would like to refer you to the Chinese credo, devised in 1920 by James Yen, a Chinese educator and organiser known for his work in mass literacy and rural reconstruction. The credo guided the rural reconstruction movement in that country. Yen established this credo for working with communities – and it went like this:

- **Go to the people.**
- **Live among the people.**
- **Learn from the people.**
- **Plan with the people.**
- **Work with the people.**
- **Start with what people know.**
- **Build on what people have.**
- **Teach by showing, learn by doing.**
- **Not a showcase but a pattern.**
- **Not odds and ends, but a system.**
- **Not a piecemeal but an integrated approach.**
- **Not a relief, but a release. BR**



BRICS ON LOCKDOWN



BRAZIL

A man walks past graffiti depicting an image of Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro wearing a face mask in downtown Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 24 March 2020 during the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic.

A THIRD OF THE GLOBAL POPULATION IS ON CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWN — HERE'S A LOOK AT HOW BRICS COUNTRIES ARE LOCKING DOWN

Photo by Fabio Teixeira/NurPhoto via Getty Images



Countries around the world are implementing measures to slow the spread of the coronavirus, from declaring national quarantines to closing schools.

More than a third of the planet's

population is under some form of restriction.

While “lockdown” isn’t a technical term used by public health officials, it can refer to anything from mandatory geographic quarantines to non-mandatory recommendations to stay at home, closures of certain types of businesses, or bans on events and gatherings, explains Lindsay Wiley, a health law professor at the Washington College of Law.

Here’s how BRICS countries and territories have implemented mandatory mass quarantines. **BR**

Source: www.businessinsider.com





Photo By Alexander Nemenov / AFP Via Getty Images



RUSSIA

A woman wearing a face mask as protection against the Covid-19 coronavirus walks past a graffiti wall in central Moscow on 23 March 2020. The image is of Soviet WWII airforce veterans.





Photo by Adnan Abidi / REUTERS



INDIA

An artist wearing a coronavirus-shaped helmet gestures as he requests a boy to stay at home during the country's national lockdown, enforced to slow the spread of the coronavirus in New Delhi, India, on 30 April 2020.





Photo by Kevin Froyer / Getty Images



CHINA

A Chinese girl wears a plastic bottle as makeshift homemade protection, along with a protective mask, while waiting to check in for a flight at Beijing Capital Airport on 30 January 2020 in Beijing, China.



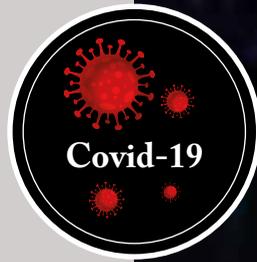


Photo By Rodrigo Bosch / AFP Via Getty Images



SOUTH AFRICA

Two men walk across Long Street, usually one of Cape Town's busiest and most popular entertainment areas with bars, clubs and restaurants, with a billboard reading "Stay Home" in the background, on 3 April 2020.



HSS Awards:

Highlights from Deputy Minister Manamela's speech. This is what he had to say...

On Covid-19's impact on society...

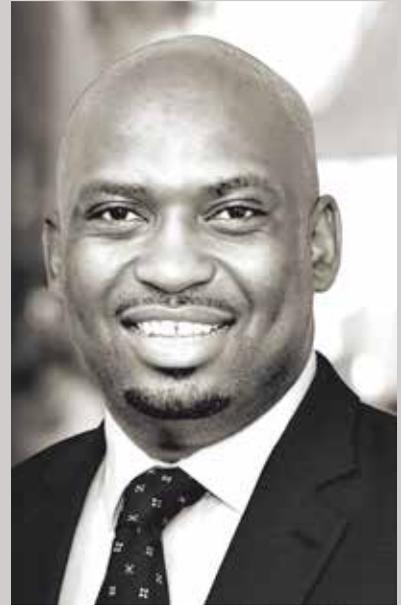
With the world seemingly in turmoil – from the pandemic of Covid-19 – to our challenging economic climate, the concerning high unemployment rate and persistent levels of inequality – never has the need for education, relevance and innovation been so intense.

On the importance of the humanities and social sciences...

In order to evolve as a people (humans in society), we depend on outputs from the humanities and social sciences. The humanities and social sciences hold the keys to unlock future potential for greater



“It is important to recognise and note that, indeed, if we are to find sustainable solutions to our pressing challenges, greater and urgent collaboration is a non-negotiable between the STEM and the HSS disciplines.”



equity, justice and social responsibility. In 2013, all indications were that vital disciplines in this broad humanities and social sciences field were in dire need of intervention to arrest their decline and stimulate and rejuvenate research activity.

On the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training

Within the framework of the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (2013), approved by Cabinet, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) thus established the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) to stimulate research and postgraduate studies in the humanities and social sciences.

It is important to recognise and note that, indeed, if we are to find sustainable solutions to our pressing challenges, greater and urgent collaboration is a non-negotiable between the STEM and the HSS disciplines.

On the NIHSS's five-year milestone...

The five-year milestone provides an opportunity for the institute and us as the department to look back, review and consider the impact this entity (NIHSS) has made in dynamising the

humanities, and most importantly, to chart a course for the future.

This journey started with a bold vision, as defined by the founding members, encapsulated in the metaphor from Mazisi Kunene's poetry:

"The child of January 2012 will enter the university gate of 2030 to study Aeronautical Engineering, confident that she is not driftwood and that her clans come from a long way back.

She will be bilingual, and her mother tongue and her English will be interchangeably strong – she can write and she can talk and, if need be, compose poems on periodic tables."

As the NIHSS celebrates its fifth golden year - with this fifth instalment of the Humanities Awards, it is pleasing and heart-warming that we, as South Africa – through the vision and leadership of Dr Bonginkosi "Blade" Nzimande – have seen it necessary to prioritise and invest in an entity such as this, whose impact in stimulating a vibrant, dynamic humanities and social sciences community is profound.

On the NIHSS's funding of post-graduate studies...

To date, the institute has graduated over 200 NIHSS-funded doctoral candidates, is continuing to fund and

support over 600 PhD candidates in the HSS and has supported over 200 research outputs, which has assisted in growing South Africa to 1% of global research output.

Over time, the Humanities Awards have featured works that attest to a thriving HSS community in South Africa, which means more innovative ideas that will go some way towards boosting research and development in the country while contributing to the transformation of our higher education curriculum – in line with the National Development Plan 2030 vision.

On the awards submissions...

I am told that this year's call for submissions has attracted more than 100 entries from creatives across the country within the humanities and social sciences disciplines, with the qualifying entries featuring 67 book entries and 18 creative collections and digital contributions. **BR**

Note: These highlights are extracted from an address delivered by Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Mr Buti Manamela, at the fifth Humanities and Social Sciences Awards. The event was held at Constitution Hill's Human Rights Precinct in Johannesburg on Thursday, 12 March 2020.

Humanities and Social Sciences AWARDS 2020

Leading HSS scholars and academics congregated to honour and celebrate outstanding contributions to the HSS.

The annual Humanities Awards 2020 ceremony was held on 12 March 2020 at The Square, Constitution Hill Human Rights Precinct in Johannesburg.

The awards honour outstanding, innovative and socially responsive scholarship, creative as well as digital contributions that

enhance and advance fields in the humanities and social sciences. In addition, they recognise and celebrate those members of the HSS community who are undertaking the necessary work of creating post-apartheid and postcolonial forms of scholarship, creative production, and digital humanities outputs. **BR**



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THE WINNERS:

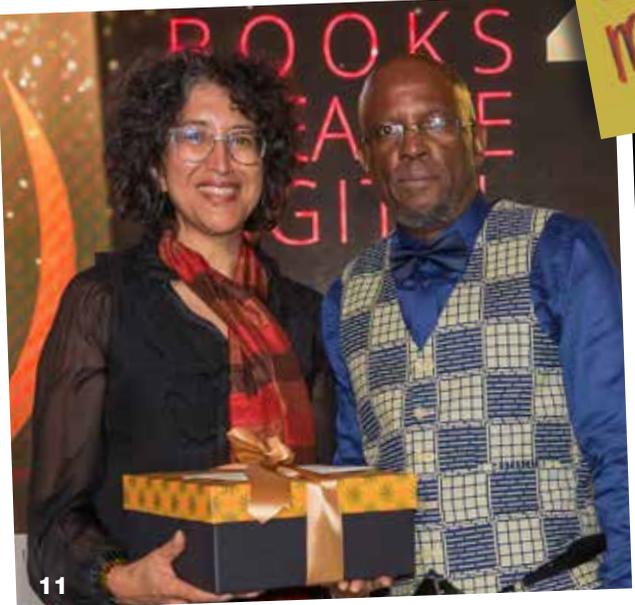
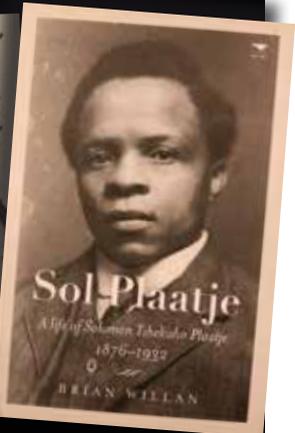
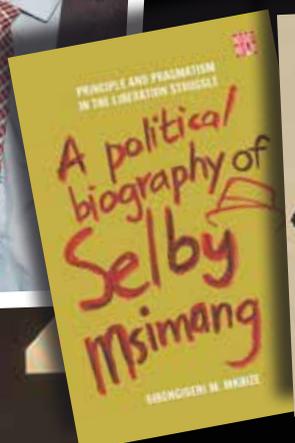
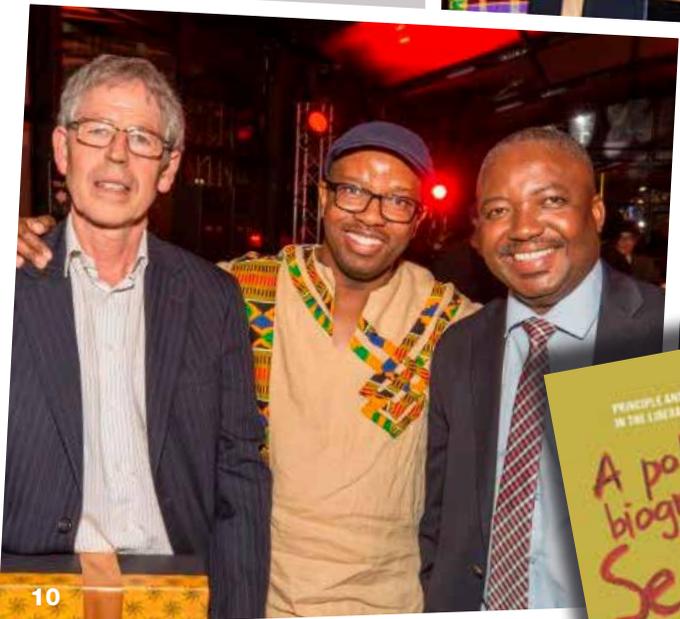
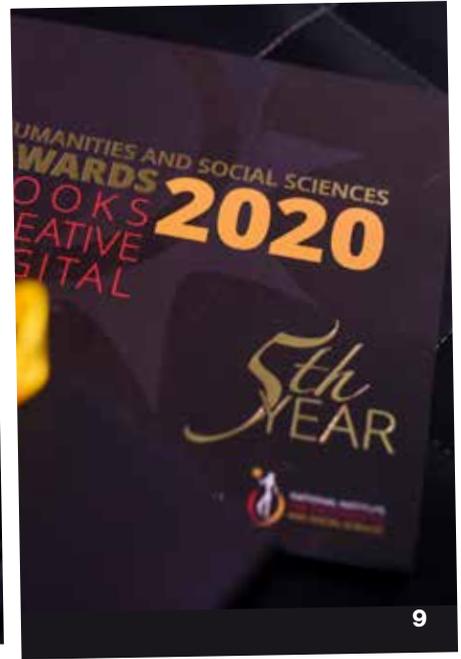
1. The HSS Awards ceremony was a resounding success, with over 300 guests in attendance
2. The Buskaid Soweto String Ensemble entertained guests with their high-energy performance
3. HSS Awards 2020 panel of judges, winners and Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation Mr Buti Manamela
4. NIHSS mentors Prof Kishore Raga, Prof Fred Hendricks, Prof Jessica Murray and Prof Hendrik Kotze mingling with one of the guests at the Humanities Awards 2020 ceremony
5. Guests received a warm welcome at the registration desk at the HSS Awards
6. Best Non-Fiction Edited Volume winners Prof Grace Khunou, Prof Edith Phaswana and Prof Hugo Canham with Non-Fiction Chair judge Prof Hlonipha Mokoena
7. Best Musical Composition winning album, Michael Blake and Mantombi Matotiyana: *Songs of Greeting, Healing and Heritage*



“The humanities and social sciences hold the keys to unlock future potential for greater equity, justice and social responsibility.”

EVENTS

- 8. Humanities Awards 2020 Collective Creations chair judge Dr Andile Khumalo and Best Public Performance winner Jay Pather
- 9. A copy of the HSS Awards catalogue was given to all the guests in attendance
- 10. Best Non-Fiction Biography joint winner Prof Brian Willan with Humanities Awards 2020 judges Sabata-Mpho Mokae and Prof Mcebisi Ndletyana
- 11. Fiction Best Poetry and Short Stories Award winner Gabeba Baderoon and chair judge Prof Nhlanhla Maahe





African
LIBERATION
DAY

25 MAY

BR
BRICS ACADEMIC REVIEW



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