

BAR

BRICS ACADEMIC REVIEW

Photo Essay: Icons Revisited
Great Gender Debate

Highlights: BRICS ACADEMIC FORUM

BRICS 2018 THEME: ENVISIONING INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH A SOCIALLY RESPONSIVE ECONOMY

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Contents



Scene outside Sandton Convention Centre at the BRICS Academic Forum in Johannesburg, 28–30 May.

34

THE OPENER

Highlights	Brics Academic Forum Highlights	0
Profile	Meet The Minister	0
Report	Gender Agenda Back On The Table	0

BRICS: THE DETAILS

Discourse	Can BRICS Universities Network?	0
Global affairs	Sino-Russia Relations	0
Q&A	Brazil: Questions Answered	0

THE CLOSER

Tourism	Spotlight: South Africa	0
Photo essay	Photo series: Icons & Influencers	0
Overview	BRICS Round Up	0

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It's all about inclusive growth for an egalitarian world

South Africa is still on a high after hosting a successful BRICS Summit in July, with this year's theme – “BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for Inclusive Growth and Shared Prosperity in the Fourth Industrial Revolution” – remaining a powerful driver for change and development. For me, the words that resonate most within that mission statement are “inclusive growth”. In May, I had the privilege of chairing the first-ever plenary session on gender at the BRICS Academic Forum. The all-woman panel, representing the bloc's five-member states, made invaluable contributions in mapping the way forward to bring about gender parity.

That it took 10 years to hold such a panel discussion is astounding. Those attending the plenary session agreed that gender parity was essential in advancing everything from peace and security to healthcare and advancing a progressive geopolitical order. What came up very strongly in our plenary discussion was the point that in order for BRICS to truly thrive, women needed to have far greater input and representation in these fields.

BRICS has a crucial role to play in acknowledging the challenging environments in which many women are forced to operate and finding ways to eliminate such barriers – and, in so doing, harness their potential. This is evident particularly in the labour market, where women often reach the glass ceiling – finding themselves passed over for executive positions in favour of men –



“ Science, technology, and education sectors can play an important role in our quest towards an egalitarian society. ”

and their take-home pay lower than that of their male counterparts. The pervasive male chauvinism present in society today, should be questioned.

Each BRICS country needs to have a strategy and policies that advocate for the full participation of women in all spheres of life, as equals. Here in South Africa, our Constitution is unequivocal about issues of equality and while some progress has been made, there is so much more to do. BRICS countries can lead

the way by promoting a truly egalitarian society where women and men can thrive, as equal citizens of the world.

Science, technology, and education sectors can play an important role in our quest towards an egalitarian society. New areas of co-operation, adopted at the July summit, include the establishment of a BRICS Vaccine Research and Development Centre lead by the Department of Science and Technology. The centre will address the challenges of

infectious diseases and thus improve the quality of life of BRICS citizens.

Education also has the potential to level the playing field between developing countries and their first-world counterparts. Deeply concerning statistics in the World Inequality Report 2018 show that average national income inequalities are rife among countries. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, the average monthly per-adult income is about \$560 or just 0.3 times the world average. It means that, on average, North

Americans earn almost as much as ten times more than the average person living in sub-Saharan Africa. Reducing the gap in education reduces individual poverty and encourages economic growth.

Our Icons Revisited feature pays tribute to some of South Africa's women trailblazers who made their mark in arts and culture, politics, healthcare and other sectors.

They succeeded against all odds and have paved the way for today's young influencers. Take the anti-apartheid activist and academic, Ruth First who initially worked as an investigative journalist in Johannesburg, reporting on the women's anti-pass campaign, migrant labour, bus boycotts and slum conditions in the 1950s. She also covered in-depth the liberation struggles of other African countries, especially the former Portuguese colonies of Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau. Her work and her anti-apartheid activities resulted in her arrest by the apartheid police. She had to flee the country and was working in Mozambique, researching the lives of Mozambican migrant labourers, when she was killed by a parcel bomb thought to have been sent by apartheid South Africa's security forces. First was unafraid to speak truth to power and bravely fought for the

liberation of the oppressed.

No less inspiring is the life and legacy of Charlotte Maxeke. A religious leader and political activist, she was one of the first black women graduates in South Africa. She built schools and churches, and involved herself in the upliftment of her community and black people in general. She also wrote about the social and political plight of women, was an early opposer of pass laws for black women and fought against low wages and laws denying women the right to vote. She did

not let her humble beginnings stop her and used her passion for education and for championing women's rights to constantly work for the betterment of society. She was determined to ensure that women could control their own destiny and, through her own self-reliance, was a shining example. Deeply religious and politically astute, she fought for a responsible citizenry, saying: "This work is

not for yourselves – kill that spirit of self, and do not live above your people but live with them. If you can rise, bring someone with you."

BRICS can rise to the challenge and implement the inclusivity that's essential for co-operation and equal partnerships to thrive. With Brazil assuming the BRICS presidency next year, which will include hosting the 2019 BRICS Academic Forum, it is hoped that some of the initiatives set out above will be implemented and monitored. The talk shop has happened; the recommendations have been made. It is time for action. We look forward to the 2019 progress report.

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

Key Recommendations from BRICS Academic Forum Inaugural Gender Session:

- To establish a Forum on Women's Equality to share experiences on the progress of women-led developments in the economic, social and political life of each member state; and to identify the obstacles to inclusivity in the BRICS domain.
- To assemble a panel of experts on gender equality to contribute to setting up BRICS's own indicator system for evaluating gender equality and enhancing women's economic and social rights under the framework of the Brics Think Tanks Council. This council serves as a platform for researchers, academia and think tanks to exchange ideas. They do so by engaging in important conversations annually to advance the BRICS agenda and make policy recommendations to the BRICS leaders for consideration.
- To support the creation of a Women's Business Council as well as other relevant formats to ensure the full participation of women in all professional and social arenas.
- To consult BRICS representatives within other multilateral entities devoted to women empowerment issues, such as UN Women (the United Nations agency championing women's equality), Women 20 (the G20 engagement group that brings together women's organisations from G20 member countries across the globe) and others.
- To establish a BRICS gender transformation desk that will undertake a collaborative study to monitor gender equality and transformation within the BRICS bloc and make further recommendations based on its findings.

Let's set the bar higher

A According to the 2017 Gallup/Knight Foundation Survey on Trust, Media and Democracy, most Americans believe that 62% of the news they read in newspapers, see on television or hear on the radio is biased. If such scepticism exists in the “land of freedom and democracy”, where the media is supposed to protect democracy, how much should we trust the media in the emerging world?

Technological advances have made it easier for people to connect with each other and to find information, including details about the major issues facing the country. But these advances present both challenges and opportunities for

progress and wreaks havoc in our institutions and among South Africans.

The good news is that not all is lost. There are still truth seekers out there who are committed to authentic story telling and seek to capture our humanity. This is what we've attempted to do, too, in our Photo Essay feature (Icons revisited) on page TBC. The young people we've selected to recreate the images of some of South Africa's most influential personalities, alive and departed, are doing excellent work and are not often celebrated or featured on mainstream media platforms. Like the role models they represent, they don't have thousands of social media followers because this not what it's about. They are activists, entrepreneurs, artists and environmentalists in their own right, pursuing their beliefs and passions for the betterment of our world rather than for instant recognition. Our aim in featuring them is to illuminate their work. At the same time, the photos memorialise the icons who have paved the way for women in different spheres of South African life.

This is timely as we look back to the 10th



The importance of adopting a human-centric approach is highlighted by Brazilian economist Adhemar Mineiro in our Q&A interview on page TBC, in which he says: “An important task for the BRICS bloc to focus on is finding legitimization, not only internationally but also within their respective countries.” He believes that this can be achieved when a concerted effort is made to connect with the needs of the population. It sounds obvious, doesn't it, but it seems so difficult for our leaders to put into practice, given the various socio-economic and political demands made on them from all sides. The ability to strike an effective balance between these demands and reach out to the community is the true test of good governance, and we all have a part to play in ensuring this happens.

One way South Africa is reaching out to humanity is in the tourism sector. South Africa is are performing well as a tourist destination and this can, in part, be attributed to “ubuntu” – that homegrown sense of shared human values and hospitality which we extend to others.

So don't lose hope just yet: do your part in ensuring that truth prevails and that our humanity is respected.

VUYO DLAMINI

“There are still truth seekers out there who are committed to authentic story telling and seek to capture our humanity.”

individuals and institutions. Today the desire for real journalism has been replaced by the desire for likes and tweets. The internet and social media are used to erode trust in our institutions as stories get released without fact checking – and even when the facts are there, the way in which they are presented is sometimes so biased that this often erodes trust, interferes with

BRICS Academic Forum, which took place in May, and where, for the first time since BRICS was formed, gender parity became an integral part of discussions. From the deliberations it is clear that women in BRICS countries face huge challenges when it comes to economic participation, health and education. You can read about this plenary session on page TBC.

“The collaboration of young people in skills development, innovation and entrepreneurship has a potential to provide solutions to many of our development challenges. For the collaboration to be effective, it has to be sustained in-between the highlight of the annual summit. As the young people of BRICS member countries, you have the technology to sustain the interaction and collaboration.”



THE OPENER



Academic Forum
Highlights

00

Profile: Minister Mmamoloko
Kubayi-Ngubane

00

Gender Agenda

00

OVERVIEW

INSIGHTS, NEWS AND COMMENTARY ABOUT BRICS

COMPILED BY VUYO DLAMINI

01 BRAZIL

Uber to open technology centre in Brazil

Uber is set to open its first technology development centre in Latin America, focusing on safety. The centre will be based in São Paulo, Brazil and will start its operations in the fourth quarter of this year.

Since CEO Dara Khosrowshahi made safety the top priority at Uber, the company says it has been working constantly to raise the bar to protect drivers and passengers.

Uber will invest \$63 million into the centre over five years. About 150 specialists will work on site to develop technologies that may become new features and functions worldwide.

The company's other existing technology centres are in Louisville, New York, Palo Alto, Pittsburgh, San Francisco and Seattle in the US; in Amsterdam, Paris, Sofia and Vilnius in Europe; and Bengaluru and Hyderabad in India.

Source: www.telanganatoday.com

02 RUSSIA

Sweeping arrests of Jehovah's Witnesses

Law enforcement authorities across Russia have carried out a sweeping campaign against Jehovah's Witnesses in recent months, the international non-governmental organisation Human Rights Watch reports. The authorities have carried out dozens of home searches, raids, interrogations and other acts of harassment and persecution.

The authorities are holding 18 men in pre-trial detention on charges of organising, participating in, or financing the activities of what they call an "extremist organisation", solely for their religious activities. Several other believers are facing the same charges and have been placed under house arrest or subjected to travel restrictions. The charges carry a maximum 10-year prison sentence.

The raids and arrests stem from an April 2017 ruling by Russia's Supreme Court which banned

all Jehovah's Witnesses organisations throughout Russia. The ruling declared the Jehovah's Witnesses Administrative Center, the head office for 395 Jehovah's Witnesses branches throughout Russia, an extremist organisation and ordered that all 395 branches be shut down.

The ruling, which affects more than 100 000 Jehovah's Witnesses across Russia, blatantly violates Russia's obligations to respect and protect religious freedom and freedom of association.

Source: www.hrw.org

03 INDIA

India lost and found

Amit Pasricha (51), a third-generation photographer, has worked on several projects that have been turned into highly acclaimed coffee-table books. His latest project, titled India Lost and Found, looks at obscure, forgotten or simply lesser-known monuments.

"Apart from a hundred well-known monuments in India that are hero-worshipped, everything else is unknown," said Pasricha. His goal is to do more than simply provoke curiosity; he wants to create discussions about these heritage sites. And he has found a new language of expression: Instagram.

The information being collected by the project, Pasricha hopes, will act as "a virtual museum of thought so that when we visit these sites, we may be able to imagine the pulse of the place".

Hence, India Lost and Found goes beyond being just a collection of photographs. Pasricha is creating a network of academics and enthusiasts that he calls his "patron network".

"This network of people will participate and value-add to the constant feed of images that India Lost and Found will post, with their own insight and thought," he says.

Follow the project on Instagram:
[@indialostandfound](https://www.instagram.com/indialostandfound)

01 BRAZIL

04 CHINA

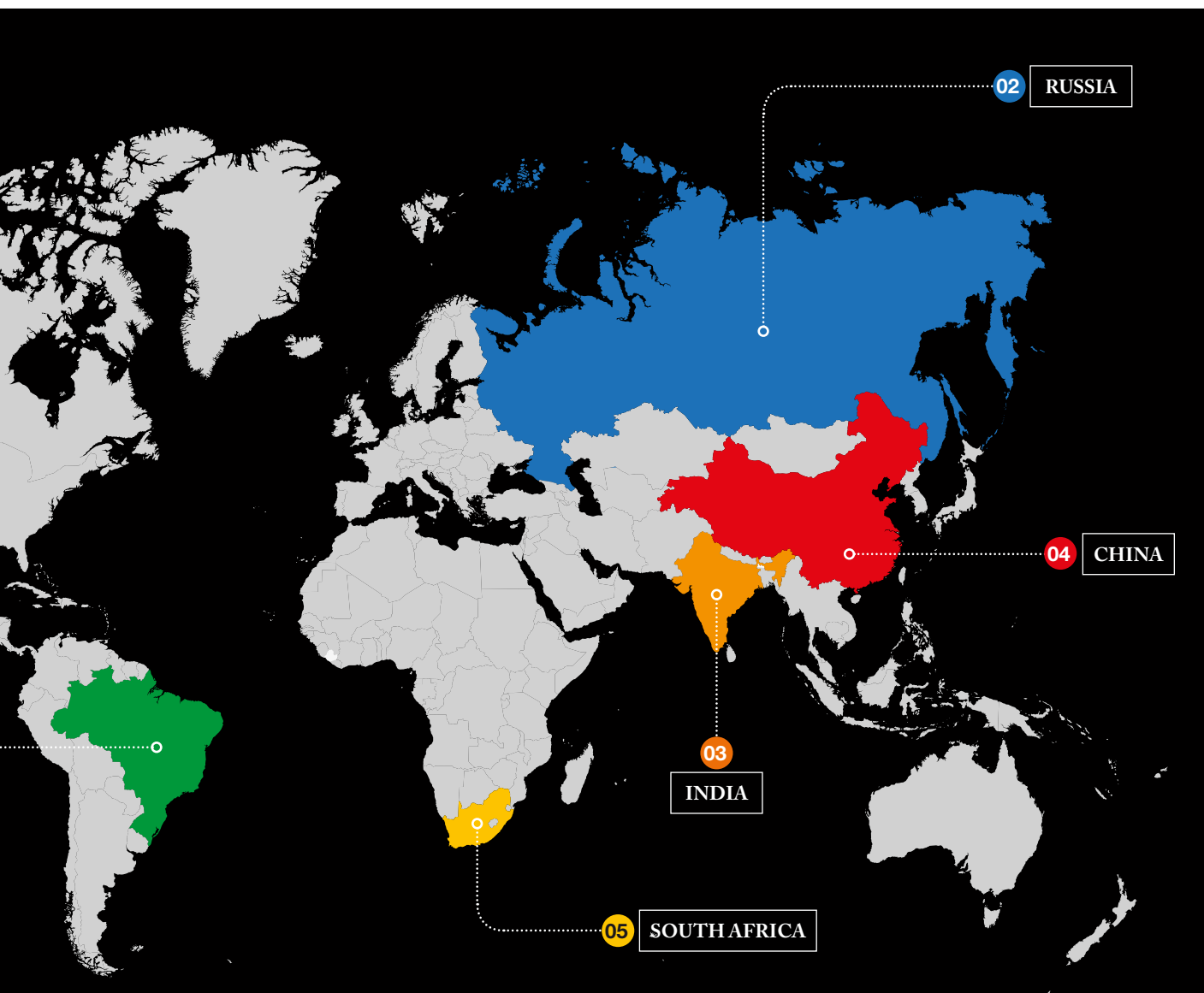
No children? Pay a tax, Chinese academics suggest

Two Chinese academics have proposed a controversial idea to encourage childbirth as their country faces an ageing population: Make people who are childless or have fewer than two children pay into a "maternity fund".

The suggestion sparked a furious social media debate in a country whose population has faced drastic family planning policies under the Communist Party, which enforced a strict one-child policy for decades.

The world's most populous country is now seeking to rejuvenate its greying population as concerns mount that an ageing and shrinking workforce could slow down its economy, while





gender imbalances could lead to social problems.

Beijing relaxed the rules in 2016, allowing people to have two children, but childbirths have not increased as much as was forecast, and there has been speculation that the government will further ease restrictions.

The two academics made their suggestion in the state-run Xinhua Daily newspaper, calling for those below the age of 40 and with fewer than two children to contribute annually to a fund that would offset childbirth costs for others.

"When the family has a second child or more, they can apply for relief from the fund as compensation for the income loss the woman and her family sustains during the maternity period," wrote Nanjing University economics professors Liu Zhibiao and Zhang Ye.

Among several other suggestions, including an expansion of childcare options, the authors proposed that those with fewer than two children could withdraw their money at retirement.

Source: www.timesnownews.com

05 SOUTH AFRICA

SA's shrinking white population

Stats SA reported that South Africa's population is now estimated at 57.7 million people, up just over 2% from the 56.5 million reported in 2017.

In the group's breakdown of the data, it includes demographic shifts, showing how South Africa's various population groups are

changing. The 2018 estimations show that there has been a turn in the white South African population numbers, which has seen steady decline over the past five years.

There are estimated to be 4.52 million white South Africans in the country in 2018, up from 4.49 million in 2017 – an increase of almost 27 000. However, this swing is not enough to counter the shrinking of the white population in the country seen since 2013.

Between 2013 and 2018, Stat SA's data shows that the white population in South Africa saw a net decline of 82 300 people. The white population has also shrunk to its lowest proportion, now accounting for only 7.8% of the total population.

Source: www.businesstech.co.za

Kofi Annan

1938~2018

gettyimages®
JOEL SAGET

THROWBACK

Kofi Annan on Civil Society

T "This changing world presents us with new challenges. Not all effects of globalisation are positive; not all non-state actors are good. There has been an ominous growth in the activities of the drug traffickers, gun-runners, money launderers, exploiters of young people for prostitution. These forces of 'uncivil society' can be combated only through global co-operation, with the help of civil society.

"Information technology has empowered civil society to be the

true guardians of democracy and good governance everywhere. Oppressors cannot hide inside their borders any longer. A strong civil society, bound together across all borders with the help of modern communications, will not let them. In a sense, it has become the new superpower – the peoples determined to promote better standards of life in larger freedom.

"Every movement starts somewhere; usually from scratch. There are no limits to what the

campaigns of tomorrow can achieve – campaigns not yet born, for causes not yet articulated, championed by hearts and minds still being formed. And it is often those single-minded enough to believe their mission to be the most important, who are also likely to make it the most successful."

This is an extract from a speech by former secretary-general of the United Nations, the late Kofi Annan, to the parliamentary group Parlatino in São Paulo, Brazil, in 1998. It was titled "The Emerging Power of Civil Society".

**Politicians
weighed in on the
importance of BRICS
to Africa at the 10th
BRICS Summit, held in
Johannesburg from
25 to 27 July.**



Paul Kagame

*President of Rwanda and chairperson
of the African Union*

"There is clearly a convergence of interests between Africa and BRICS members. What is needed most is a mechanism for effective delivery on agreed areas. Working together, we will continue to be a principal source of economic dynamism in the years to come."



Peter Mutharika

President of Malawi

"Malawi has a 22-year infrastructure masterplan. We need roads, railways and airports, and the creation of the New Development Bank will make it easier for us to access funds in future for infrastructure development."



Hage Geingob

President of Namibia

"Africa has strong, trusted and reliable partners. In our endeavours to move forward, we need partners to support Africa."



Emmerson Mnangagwa

President of Zimbabwe

"As we go home, we carry a sense that better days are coming. Zimbabwe stands ready to enhance collaboration, inclusive growth and shared responsibility for all."



Ali Bongo Ondimba

*President of Gabon and chair of the Economic
Community of Central African States*

"Resources are here, potential is here. We are ready to engage in a win-win partnership with BRICS. We have been shown the way; let's sit down and talk for the good of our future and our children."



ARTS & CULTURE

**BRICS Helps Build
Youth Ties**

M Marianna Donner, a Russian ballet teacher, instructs three girls at the Banlam Grand Theater in Xiamen, East China's Fujian province.

Donner, who started learning ballet as a seven-year-old, had been a dancer for 24

years before she left her Russian hometown of Yaroslavl last April to work as a ballet teacher in Xiamen.

Since then, Donner has taught more than 50 students. "Ballet to Russia is what Peking opera is to China," says Donner. "I am honoured to act as a cultural ambassador in Xiamen."

Donner says she came to China because the country is relatively unknown to her and has many opportunities, adding that she fell in love with Xiamen because of its "good weather, nice environment and friendly people". **Source: www.chinadaily.com.cn**



7 OCTOBER 2018

Brazilian voters go to the polls to pick local and national representatives and state governors, and to cast their first vote for president. A second-round runoff between the top two candidates is scheduled for 28 October.

2019

South Africa
India

HIGHLIGHTS

ABOUT WRITER

Ngangom is an Associate Fellow with the Climate Change and Development Initiative. She works as a development economist. She holds an MSc degree in Development Studies from the London School of Economics and Political Science, and a BA in economics from the Shri Ram College of Commerce in India.

Merging Tracks from Academia to Real politik

TANOUBI NGANGOM EXPLAINS THE PURPOSE OF THE BRICS ACADEMIC FORUM AND ITS ROLE IN ESTABLISHING A NEW GLOBAL ORDER.



TANOUBI NGANGOM

The year 2015 is considered a watershed year. Not only did the international community come together to commit to landmark agreements, it also opted for a more inclusive course in getting to those agreements. For instance, a key aspect that differentiates the post-2015 Development Agenda from its predecessor is the wide-ranging nature of its deliberations – the United Nations went out to actively seek inputs from civil society, academia and the business community in its attempt to identify the final set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Similar outreach efforts were undertaken in developing the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to finance these SDGs as well as the COP 21 summit (the 21st annual session of the Conference of the Parties to the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change), which culminated in the Paris Agreement to combat climate change.

The academic community and



other civil society stakeholders were finally included in spaces that were traditionally limited to governments, what is commonly termed as the Track I. This contemporary format of global governance – the contribution of the academic community in matters of realpolitik – is one pioneered by the BRICS collective.

BRIDGING THE GAP: FROM TRACK I TO TRACK II

Oftentimes, negotiations on issues of global governance are conducted behind closed doors, with little to no input from civil society and academia. The BRICS Academic Forum was established to bridge these gaps. The result? It has not only created a more democratic process of deliberation, but has also invited fresh

and innovative ideas for solving today's geopolitical and geo-economic challenges.

Here's how the forum came into being: In an increasingly complicated global governance structure with overlapping problems and no ready-made solutions, the BRICS grouping recognised the need to move beyond the Track I dialogues. As a bloc whose primary aim was to offer an alternative post-Western governance template, BRICS needed to find new arrangements competent enough to take on contemporary challenges. This was the genesis of the Academic Forum. In May 2009, a month before the first leaders' summit took place, the academic community of the then four-member BRIC group – Brazil, Russia, India and China – met in New Delhi for the first preparatory forum.

WHAT IS THE BRICS ACADEMIC FORUM?

Since then, academic scholars and think tanks from the five BRICS countries have gathered each year, in whichever country is presiding over BRICS at that time, to brainstorm and present policy solutions ahead of the leaders' summit. As the formal Track II channel of the BRICS summit, the Academic Forum provides a unique institutionalised channel to offer intellectual input to the diplomatic negotiation process.

As such, the themes and the agenda of the Academic Forum are generally designed to align with those of the upcoming leaders' summit. The highlights of the discussions are captured in the Academic Forum recommendations, which are then forwarded by the each country's delegation to their respective BRICS Sherpa, or emissary. (Defined as the personal representative of a head of state or government who prepares for an international summit, the sherpa is generally quite influential but lacks the authority to make any final decisions.) These recommendations form both a template and an essential guide for nations heading into the leaders' summit.

Hence, the Academic Forum provides strategic benefits by serving as an academic primer for practitioners and diplomats negotiating and drafting the final declaration.

FROM FORUM TO SUMMIT: IDEAS TO POLICY

The Academic Forum has, on a number of occasions, been criticised as being ineffective. Commentators, however, often fail to understand the purpose of this Track II channel. The academic brainstorming sessions are meant to generate ideas that challenge the conventional boundaries of diplomatic negotiations; ideas still important enough for the BRICS leaders to consider. As such, the translation of even one such idea into concrete results is a significant achievement.

Judged by this barometer, the Academic Forum has more than fulfilled its purpose. One of the BRICS



Professor Georgy Toloraya

“ Oftentimes, negotiations on issues of global governance are conducted behind closed doors, with little to no input from civil society and academia. The BRICS Academic Forum was established to bridge these gaps. ”



grouping's primary institutions today, the New Development Bank (NDB), is an idea born out of the academic conversations. Taken up for consideration at the New Delhi Summit in 2012, the NDB was established at the sixth BRICS Summit, which took place in Fortaleza, Brazil, in 2014. The creation of the NDB is no doubt a remarkable contribution, offering a much-needed source of infrastructure finance, free from the restrictive conditions imposed by the Bretton Woods institutions, namely the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The Contingency Reserve Arrangement (CRA), established in 2015, serves as a financial safety net for BRICS member states by providing liquidity and precautionary instruments in response to possible short-term balance of payments pressures. The CRA is another example of an idea that originated at the Academic Forum having been developed into a concrete entity.

Many ideas deliberated at the recent Academic Forum in Johannesburg are similarly reflected in the 2018 BRICS Summit Declaration. The emphasis on a rules-based, open multilateral trading system is one such example, as is the proposal for BRICS co-operation in energy research. As is the nature of such deliberations, these ideas have long incubation periods before they're realised. Having said that, the Academic Forum recommendations that appear in the final summit documents is indicative of the weight that the Track II carries.

FOSTERING A BRICS COMMUNITY

A second key aspect of the Academic Forum is the thriving community of scholars and the important people-to-people exchanges that are fostered.

Global normative frameworks are not created through singular moments when leaders meet. Rather, norms are influenced and shaped through the exchange of thoughts and ideas, and through the continuous creation and dissemination of academic research and knowledge. The Academic Forum and the associated series of BRICS workshops and dialogues allow the



Dr. Ivan Oliveira

five countries to amass and build on a growing body of knowledge. This information structure has been dubbed BRICSology.

The forum also facilitates research collaboration among scholars of the BRICS countries. It marks an important step in driving innovation and actionable solutions, especially given the numerous developmental challenges common to emerging economies. Such platforms provide an opportunity for scholars to visit each other's countries and experience different cultures, increasing the chances of solutions being found that are applicable to the overall BRICS collective.

A BRICS PROPOSITION TO THE WORLD

If the BRICS bloc aims to create a

“One of the BRICS grouping's primary institutions today, the New Development Bank (NDB), is an idea born out of the academic conversations.”



Ms. Dong Weihua

more balanced and representative international system, then the engagement of the BRICS academic community must grow beyond the confines of the BRICS Summit Agenda. It would be beneficial for the BRICS academic experts to engage and offer their input at key gatherings on the global governance calendar – for instance, ahead of the G20 Summit that sets the economic agenda; or prior to the UN-backed annual COP summit that sets the agenda on global climate change and sustainability. The BRICS Academic community, by virtue of its ability to interact on a spectrum of policy issues, has the strategic advantage of presenting a BRICS response to common problems. It is this advantage that the community must exploit in order to create a more representative governance structure.



POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

Minister of Higher Education and Training Naledi Pandor delivered the keynote address to delegates attending the 10th BRICS Academic Forum, which took place in Sandton from 28 to 31 May. Here are some of the challenges and proposals she put forward in her speech:



The BRICS partnership should address the needs and interests of the most vulnerable

The BRICS partnership offers an alternative model of global friendship and solidarity. It needs to articulate a more optimistic and a more resolute narrative of inclusion and progressive values, a narrative that commits to addressing the needs and interests of the most vulnerable; a narrative that suggests the possibility of a bloc that can redress the imbalances that confront so many millions in our communities and the world broadly.



Key areas that BRICS should focus on

When BRICS was first established, the key areas of co-operation tended to be largely economic, with a focus on international trade and global governance. Reform of multilateral institutions such as the IMF, World Bank, and the UN Security Council were key on our agenda. These remain as areas we must address. However, we have recognised the need to elaborate a broader agenda and have done so. Our agenda includes issues ranging from agriculture, health and education to energy, science and technology, academic exchange and many others. We must ensure, though, that this list contributes to real change and not increased dialogue.



The importance of creating a new body of young people

We believe the Think Tanks facility establishes a strategic platform for designing initiatives that will signal a collaborative approach to knowledge creation, research and the development of concrete advice on solutions. Of course, it will be vital that the ideological philosophy that informs our knowledge generation is progressive and oriented to people development, justice and democracy. Linked to this hope, we also need to factor in the important task of creating a new body of talented young people, able to lead think tanks such as the ones gathered here, and fully appreciative of the need for progressive and responsive concepts and ideas. **BR**

BRICS Academic Forum 2018 in numbers

200
total number of delegates

55
speakers



8
parallel sessions



3
plenary sessions



45
academic papers presented

7 countries represented:
Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Namibia and Senegal

4

languages represented: English, Russian, Portuguese and Mandarin

BRICS Gallery

BRICS Gallery

PROFILE

COMPILED BY: VUYO DLAMINI

Striving for excellence

MINISTER MMAMOLOKO KUBAYI-NGUBANE DRAWS ON HER OWN TOUGH UPBRINGING TO MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE SHE SERVES



Science and Technology Minister Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane is proud of her roots, saying it gives her the impetus to transform the lives of the people she serves – mainly the poor and downtrodden. One of five siblings, she was born in Meadowlands, Soweto, and grew up in an informal settlement, Poortjie, in the south of Johannesburg. Her mother, a domestic worker, made sure that she obtained her matric, despite falling pregnant at 17.

So, six weeks after giving birth, she was back at school while her family took care of her son. And despite the odds, Kubayi-Ngubane became Thusa-Setjhaba Secondary School's top pupil, going on to study for her BA degree at Vista University.

She's used to tough circumstances, saying her childhood challenges gave her the drive to succeed.

Since starting her term of office at the science and technology ministry in February, she has made gender inclusion



Minister Kubayi-Ngubane

BRICS PROJECT IN THE PIPELINE

One of the latest areas of BRICS co-operation – proposed by South Africa and given the go-ahead by the bloc – is the establishment of a **vaccine research and development centre**. The project will provide a platform for collaborative efforts to conduct

thorough research in tackling the burden of diseases that continue to plague developing countries and allow economies of scale to address vaccine requirements in the BRICS countries.

WHY: To combat infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis, the Zika virus, Ebola, Yellow Fever and Group B Streptococcus, which are rife in Africa, by supporting vaccine innovation.

For more info visit: www.dst.gov.za

a priority and ensures that women are an integral part of all of the department's programmes. She is also a strong advocate for women and girls pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Women remain underrepresented in these sectors. According to the 2017 Global Gender Gap Report, only 13% of this country's graduates in the STEM fields are women, despite the country being ranked 19th out of 144 countries on gender parity.

In the BRICS context China, India and Russia are among the top five countries in the world with the most STEM graduates. South Africa and Brazil are performing poorly in this regard. Kubayi-Ngubane is making every attempt to champion this cause and to this end, has criss-crossed the country to encourage pupils to take up subjects that will enable them to be active participants in our emerging economy and drive innovation on a national – and even a global – scale. Earlier this year, the minister hosted high school pupils from Khayelitsha in the Cape, spending the day with them as part of the “take a girl child to work day” initiative.

Kubayi-Ngubane served brief stints as Minister of Energy and then as Minister of Communications, before taking up her current post. She started her career by working in non-governmental organisations and in the private sector, and has a keen interest in social development.

Having been politically active during her student years, she joined the ANC Youth League and worked her way up the ranks. She has been a Member of Parliament since 2009 and now sits on the ANC's national executive committee.

Kubayi-Ngubane is known for her strong work ethic. She told her staff in the communications ministry: “I always urge colleagues that in a professional environment I don't expect you to be friends with me or smile every time I come along. I expect the work to be done. I don't compromise on quality; professionalism is key. If you don't deliver on what you are supposed to do, we will fight.”

Striving for excellence is part of the job, adds Kubayi-Ngubane, who

holds a master's degree in public and development management through Wits University. A career politician, she is a stickler for detail and process. “I always want to be in a department that is the best amongst all. I'm a perfectionist and I go through documents because I always want to be among the best.”

Her commitment to the democratic

process is uncompromising and Kubayi-Ngubane strongly believes in people power – in every South African rolling up their sleeves to build the country we dream of for future generations. “Every individual has a responsibility and a duty to contribute towards building a South Africa that is equal, non-racial, non-sexist and united,” she concludes. **BR**



REPORT:

third BRICS young scientist forum

South Africa hosted the third BRICS Young Scientists Forum from 25 to 29 June 2018 as Chair of the BRICS. The main goals of the 3rd BRICS YSF were:

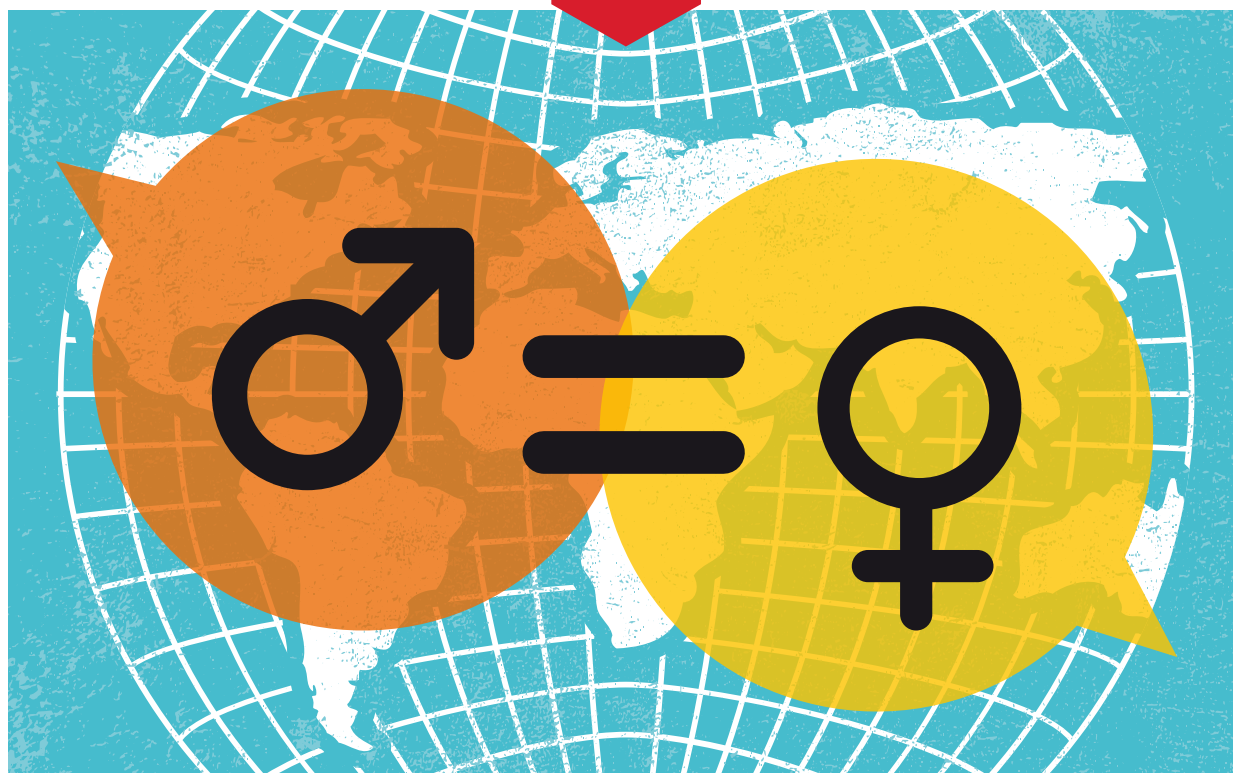
- To provide a platform for talented BRICS young scientists and researchers to exchange perspectives on transformative change and forge sustainable research partnerships, links and networks;
- To promote youth driven creative solutions to the most pressing socio-economic problems in their societies;
- To promote academic and policy exchanges and dialogues amongst the

BRICS youth; and

- To promote interactive contact between young scientists and established scientists and researchers from the BRICS member countries.

Under the theme “Building BRICS Youth Leadership through Science, Technology and Innovation”, the 3rd BRICS YSF highlighted the strategic importance of science, technology and innovation as key drivers of youth entrepreneurship and leadership. In addition, the 3rd BRICS YSF included a dedicated segment on young women in science and discussions on crosscutting issues such as science advice, science communication and science diplomacy. While the 3rd BRICS YSF followed the format of previous forums by having thematic discussions (this year the focus was on energy, water and social science), and also included the additional new components such as the BRICS young innovator prize competition.

REPORT



The Great Gender Debate

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BRICS ACADEMIC FORUM A DECADE AGO, GENDER FORMED PART OF THE AGENDA IN A PLENARY SESSION AT THIS YEAR'S GATHERING IN JOHANNESBURG. AT THE SESSION, AN UPDATE WAS PROVIDED ON THE PLIGHT OF WOMEN IN THE BRICS COUNTRIES. FROM THE CONTRIBUTIONS, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT GENDER PLAYS AN INTEGRAL ROLE IN RACE, CLASS AND CASTE DIFFERENTIATION, AS WELL AS IN ALL SPHERES OF LIFE, BE IT GOVERNMENT, ACADEMIA, WORK, THE HOME FRONT AND IN COMMUNITIES.

STATE OF WOMEN IN BRICS



Brazil:

Conservative trend on the rise
The first woman to hold the presidential office in Brazil was Dilma Rousseff, elected in 2011. But since her impeachment in 2016, the presence of women in influential government positions has been reduced and the Ministry of Policies for Women has been downgraded and turned into a secretariat within the Ministry of Justice. The staunch anti-abortion politician, Fátima Pelaes, is in charge of the secretariat.



Russia:

Jobs that women cannot do
The Russian Labour Code's infamous Article 253 encompasses a number of jobs – 465, to be exact – that women cannot do, such as mining, welding,

drilling and diving. The ban also includes more everyday professions such as carpentering, plumbing and driving various vehicles such as metro buses with more than 14 seats, and lorries transporting more than 2.5 tons. There's also a legal prohibition against women driving excavators and lifting weights over 10kg more than twice an hour when they're at work.

Source: www.calvertjournal.com



India:

Prevalence of anaemia

In India, anaemia is widespread and continues to be a challenge. Just over half (51%) of Indian women of reproductive age (15 to 49 years) are anaemic, according to the Global Nutrition Report 2017. Anaemia causes lethargy and fatigue, which has a direct and adverse effect on performance and economic

productivity. Doctors say low levels of nutrition are not the only cause of the high anaemia rate among women in India. "Nutrition alone cannot address the problem. Poor hygiene is a major cause for anaemia because it prevents the absorption of nutritious food," said Dr Indu Taneja, an obstetrician and gynaecologist at Fortis Escorts Hospital in Faridabad. **Source: Times of India**



China:

Discrimination in the workplace Chinese women battle discriminatory attitudes and practices in the workplace. Recent reports show that gender discrimination remains deeply entrenched in China's job market. A recent report by Human Rights Watch has found that 19% of adverts for jobs in China's civil service in 2018 indicated "men only" or "men preferred". Additionally, many job posts listed height or weight requirements for female applicants, and some companies used the physical attributes of females currently employed there to lure male applicants. In addition, the monthly average salary for women is 22% less than that of men.

Source: www.cfr.org



South Africa:

Gender-based violence on the rise Femicide is on the rise in South Africa, with Statistics SA reporting in June that the murder rate for women increased at an alarming rate – by 117% – between 2015 and 2016/17. And, the number of women who experienced sexual offences also jumped from 31 665 in 2015/16 to 70 813 in 2016/17, which is an increase of 53%. These are drastic increases in less than 24 months, stated the Statistics SA report, titled Crime against Women in South Africa. The report provides an overview of all types of crime, including violent crimes, as they affect women in South Africa. **Source: www.sanews.gov.za**



ACTIVIST AGENDA

Divita Shandilya is the programme coordinator for South Solidarity Initiative (SSI) in India. SSI is a knowledge-activist hub which aims to encourage critical debate and policy intervention on international issues related to India. Shandilya highlights for the BRICS Academic Review the most salient aspects of a statement, prepared by the BRICS Feminist Watch (BFW), that was addressed to the leaders of the BRICS member states. The statement was submitted to the Department of International Relations and Cooperation, as well as to Professor Anil Sooklal, South Africa's ambassador to BRICS, by the Economic Justice Network on behalf of BFW.

During the 10th BRICS summit, BFW made a number of recommendations which it would like BRICS countries to adopt. Which of these are the most pressing?

As an alliance from the South that advocates for women's social, political, economic and cultural rights, we at BFW believe that it is imperative for BRICS governments and institutions to do more to recognise, redistribute and remunerate women's work. In emerging economies and developing countries in particular, women's work is often unrecognised, undervalued and unpaid or underpaid. We think it is

critical to recognise women as farmers, producers, traders and workers, and to ensure their economic empowerment and that they have access to resources through specific policies. We also think it is important to include them as actors in the development process by ensuring their participation in decision-making.

Clearly, women's voices are still not being heard, and this hinders the progress of women. What do you think would be the most impactful way to ensure that women are placed at the top of the agenda within the BRICS countries?

It is important to include women in the decision-making processes, especially those from affected communities and across the intersection of caste, race and class. All stakeholders need to realise that ensuring women's rights is not only at the core of human rights, but is imperative to ensure sustainable development. Therefore, it is vital for civil society, the media and other stakeholders to engage with their governments as well as the private sector in order to impress this upon them and ensure that women's rights are protected and promoted.

Who can be a member of BFW and how do they get access to the organisation?

BFW is a membership-based alliance, not an organisation. We invite feminist activists/advocates and Civil Society Organisations actors working in, and/or from, emerging economies of the South to be our members. They should preferably have some previous or current affiliation or experience of working in international financial institutions (IFIs), development, the political economy, the environment, and human rights, but this is not an exhaustive list.

To contact the alliance, they can send a mail to bricsfeministwatch@gmail.com. BR

How many years will it take for BRICS countries to achieve gender parity? **Source: www.ipea.gov.br**

95

Brazil

145

Russia

42

India

161

China

52

South Africa



Lulama Nare,
chairperson of the
Commission for
Gender Equality

Why gender equality matters in South Africa

WHILE SOUTH AFRICA HAS MADE SOME PROGRESS TOWARDS BRIDGING THE GENDER EQUALITY GAP, THE COUNTRY STILL HAS A LONG WAY TO GO. LULAMA NARE, CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION FOR GENDER EQUALITY, SPOKE AT THE RECENT BRICS ACADEMIC FORUM'S FIRST EVER PLENARY SESSION ON GENDER. SHE SHARES SOME INSIGHTS ON WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN THIS REGARD.

A Among the issues Nare raised at the forum was a lack of transformation at higher education institutions and the fact that too few women hold executive posts in the corporate world and leadership positions in government departments.

“Why does gender equality matter in South Africa?” asked Nare. “I think there is no question why it should matter in South Africa when one considers that the country has a history of segregation; and that segregation on its own had an element of taking away from different races. But most importantly, women were marginalised and negatively affected by the apartheid system.

“Therefore, South Africa had no choice but to establish a Chapter 9 institution that would ensure that the rights of women are respected in the country, and that these rights remain indivisible from the law. Traditional law cannot affect women's rights; neither can general budgetary constraints.”

As part of its mandate to hold those in power responsible for making sure that women are not marginalised, and that they be afforded the same opportunities as their male counterparts, the Commission for Gender Equality conducted research to determine the numbers of women holding top positions at universities and in corporations and state departments – and

to gauge what investment was being made in developing women at these institutions.

Researchers found there was still little progress being made to bridge the gender equality gap. Despite government having promulgated the Employment Equity Act, South African employers are still lax when it comes to advancing women and promoting them to executive positions.

“In South Africa we have a law dealing with employment equity,” said Nare. “It is meant to redress the wrongs created by apartheid and provide employment opportunities for women and other designated groups who were affected by the apartheid system.

“What we have found are different outcomes. We still experience the disparities that apartheid created in our country. We cannot run away from that.

“Our Constitution contains the Bill of Rights, a human rights charter that protects the civil, political and socio-economic rights of all South Africans, and prohibits unfair discrimination. So, if the rights of women are indivisible from the Constitution, which entrenches

socio-economic rights, you can't subject a socio-economic right to a traditional law or a religious law."

The Gender Equality Commission also found that there were still a number of discrepancies in the advancement of women in South Africa, added Nare.

"South Africa has instituted a national gender framework, which means that each government department has to have someone responsible for the development of women and for championing their rights. This person reports directly to the director-generals or the department head. At universities, it is vice-chancellors who are accountable to the commission."

This allows the commission to hold these executives accountable.

"The commission has the right to call on university vice-chancellors and ask them where women are positioned in their institutions and in which faculties they work," said Nare.

"We are also mandated to find out how much money is being invested in the advancement of women and women's issues.

"Likewise, the commission has the right to call on the state to find out about the funds it is contributing towards women empowerment and how much is being set aside to invest in educating girls in urban as well as rural areas, in order to bring them into the mainstream economy."



First ever Gender and Equality Panel at BRICS Academic Forum:

Mostafa (Brazil); Tanoubi Ngangom (India); Gao Hao (China); Lulama Nare (South Africa); Victoria Panova (Russia) and Chair: Sarah Mosoetsa

are in top management roles in the country. This begs the question: Why is transformation so slow?

Nare has attributed the lack of transformation to some institutions not implementing the changes spelled out in the Bill of Rights. "We find that women in the workplace have to negotiate from a weaker position, and end up taking home a salary that's 20% lower than that of their male counterparts with the same qualifications."

Institutions of higher learning lag behind the most in closing the gender parity gap, according to Nare.

"Universities are taking much longer to

here, more African women there, Indian women here, and this is where you need to reduce men.' But the vice-chancellors are ignoring these calls.

"The commission has raised this with both the chief executive officers and the director-generals, and we have called on them to make the necessary changes. The commission then gives input and sets time-frames for the heads of universities to implement the recommendations in order to ensure gender inclusivity.

"In addition to these institutions failing to meet the state's target of 50% female representation, the commission has also found that the representation of people with disabilities has dropped to 1%."

Nare said the commission had raised its concerns about the slow pace of gender transformation in the National Assembly. It also made mention of the glaring wage gap between men and women, and the general lack of regard for women's safety and security.

While acknowledging that women's issues were being addressed, Nare concluded with this call to the public: "Everyone has a role to play in ensuring that our institutions are transformed and that women are at the top of the agenda." **BR**

“Everyone has a role to play in ensuring that our institutions are transformed and that women are at the top of the agenda.”

Nare said even though South Africa had made some improvements in ensuring greater female representation in top positions, the country was still lagging behind.

According to the World Economic Forum's annual Gender Gap report, in 2016 South Africa was leading its BRICS counterparts when it came to improving gender parity. Yet the fact remains that only 3.4% of black women

transform. The leadership there remains male-dominated and, at executive level, generally you'll find one or two women among 10 men.

"Those in top posts write their reports to the state, indicating where women are positioned in their respective universities. The state responds with recommendations, telling these executives where exactly transformation is needed and saying, for instance: 'You need to bring more women



Can BRICS
Universities Network?
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Sino-Russia
Relations
00

Brazil: Questions
Answered
00

BRICS countries catching up with EU and US in publication activity, according to Scopus

EXPERTS FROM THE HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS REVIEWED THE BRICS COUNTRIES' RESEARCH LANDSCAPE USING THE 2000-2015 DATA FROM THE SCOPUS CITATION DATABASE AND FOUND ACADEMIC ACTIVITY IN BRICS TO BE GROWING AT A FAST PACE AND CATCHING UP WITH THAT OF THE EU COUNTRIES AND THE US.

In 2010, the total number of publications from BRICS exceeded the number of publications from the US, and in 2014 they almost equalled those from the 28 countries of the EU. In 2015, BRICS researchers produced nearly 29% of the global publications cited in Scopus (versus 10.7% in 2010), of which 18% came from China, 5% from India, 2.6% each from Russia and Brazil, and 0.72% from South Africa. **For full report visit www.eurekalert.org**



01

By Joel Netshitenzhe,
executive director of the
Mapungubwe Institute for
Strategic Reflection (MISTRA)

Opportunities and challenges in ushering a new global order: role of the BRICS network university



DISCOURSE

PREFACE: Delegates, researchers and university representatives met at Stellenbosch University in the Western Cape for the third BRICS Network University Conference, which took place from 5 to 7 July. The theme was *Unlocking BRICS Universities' Partnerships: Postgraduate Education Opportunities and Challenges*. It presented a unique opportunity for delegates from the BRICS Network universities – representing 36 universities and 11 other higher education institutions located across the five member states — to strengthen research partnerships and academic exchanges. This, to consolidate the BRICS education agenda and gain a comparative advantage in the global knowledge system. We bring you two of the notable speeches delivered at the conference.



02

By Professor Ari Sitas,
chairperson of the South African
BRICS Think Tank (SABTT)

Placing University Institutions at Centre of BRICS and its Success



Opportunities and challenges in ushering a new global order: role of the BRICS network university

By Joel Netshitenzhe, executive director Maphungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA)

I wish to thank the Department of Higher Education and Training and the organisers of the BRICS Network University Conference for the invitation to take part in this most enlightening exchange on the academic tasks that our countries face.

It is an honour to interact with academic leaders of the BRICS community as you strive to strengthen co-operation in areas of common interest. Ultimately, whatever the details of the thematic engagements outlined in the programme, the primary responsibility of the Network University, in my view, is continually to refine the philosophical meaning of the BRICS partnership, and to help give it life in actual practice. As the intellectual interactions intensify, the role of BRICS – as a critical association in the global community – will evolve and become even more potent.

It is primarily on these issues that I will dedicate my input this evening.

I will do so proceeding from the understanding that much rests on the intellectual community to inject more reason into the sentiment of BRICS association. The Network University therefore has a critical responsibility to act as the ideational locomotive to the social agency of an alliance that has an important role to play in defining the global agenda and balance of forces.

In reflecting on these issues, I will start off by succumbing to the temptation to state the obvious: the 10th BRICS Summit, which South Africa has the honour to host, speaks to the reality that the BRICS notion is more than a sentimental fad of the imagination of an asset manager. It is a living reality in the global family of nations.

Attached to this BRICS notion are the natural dictates of geography, the distinguished position that each of our

countries occupies in our regions, the historical solidarity across the miles in the struggle against colonialism and apartheid, and the need to search for alternatives to the dominant global ideological and policy discourse.

What, then, is the global context within which the BRICS Network University operates; how do we characterise the current conjuncture? Four macro trends stand out in this regard.

The first macro trend is reflected in the shifting sands of polarity. On the one hand, we live in a global community with one dominant social system. What islands of a different socio-economic system may prevail in parts of the globe, are wired in multifaceted relations of mutual economic dependence with advanced economies of the North, which, in turn, also enjoy unassailable military dominance. In this context, it can be argued that current global reality is characterised by primary unipolarity.

However, the global power structure is in constant flux, with the balance shifting from the North. This dynamic may appear glacial in its pace, but some estimate that by 2050, four of the five BRICS countries – China, India, Brazil and Russia – will be among the top six largest economies on a global scale. (National Development Plan, 2011 and background documents on Scenario Planning, 2007/08, The Presidency, SA). Combined with current regional blocs and other alliances of various levels of autonomy, these developments bring out in bold relief an emergent polycentricity, the secondary multipolarity that characterises the current global order.

The second macro trend is the pace at which technological advancement is unfolding. From genetics to bio- and nano-technologies, today we are entering the phase in which

digital technology and machine learning will be more comprehensively embedded in most human activities, a fusion of the physical, the digital and the biological spheres. As we know, great progress can be harvested from these discoveries for the benefit of humanity as a whole. However, this depends on forms of social organisation and the manner in which national and global income is created, appropriated and distributed. The issue of the social ethics that accompany these technologies necessarily has to engage our mind. This is even more pertinent, given the possibility of what some refer to as the fifth domain of warfare (in addition to land, air, sea and space), which, in the current era of careless abandon, can break out, presaging a global conflagration.

We referred earlier to the mutual dependence across regions and social systems; and this underlines the third critical attribute of the world in which the BRICS community operates. Advances in technology have made possible the dispersal of production sites across the world; and there is no possibility of unscrambling a global economy that operates as a unit in real time, to quote Manuel Castells. Sites of elements of the production chain may shift, but the dynamics of economic coupling, decoupling and recoupling will not change. These dynamics are simply a logical corollary of the level of global technological development.

This brings us to the last attribute of the current global system. Such has been the rapacious licence of poorly regulated markets that the role of money as a means of exchange has been superseded by money as finance capital, begetting money. We are all familiar with the current levels of financialisation, such that the value of trade in financial products today exceeds that of trade in goods and services. Already, by the late 1990s, while the global volume of trade in goods and services was about US\$2.5-billion per day, foreign exchange trade was at US\$1.5-trillion per day. And it is largely because of this rapacious conduct of poorly regulated finance capital that the world economy went into recession a decade ago and continues to this day to face the danger of secular stagnation.

The BRICS Network University, in my view, has a responsibility to study these phenomena, extract the implications they have for our countries – individually and collectively – and posit relevant courses of action that would rebound to our people's benefit. This we should do, proceeding from the understanding that these technical


“...the global political and economic system is in poly-crisis. The dearth of strategic leadership creates the very real possibility that humanity can stumble into a meltdown.”

manifestations of global society contain within them major implications for the world's political economy and for geopolitics – occasioned both by the objective conditions which we can do little about, and by how various societal leaders across the globe respond to these objective conditions.

One of the consequences of these responses, in large parts of the world, is what has become the defining character of the current global political economy: that is, the iniquitous distribution of income, assets and opportunity. This is clearly reflected in the observation by Oxfam in its January 2017 report that “...just eight men own the same wealth as the poorest half of the world ... The very design of our economies and the principles of our economics have taken us to this extreme, unsustainable and unjust point.”

Indeed, the trickle-up effect in terms of income is playing out unashamedly in most economies. The International Labour Organisation, in its 2013 Global Wage Report, captures this succinctly:

“During much of the past century, [it says], a stable labour income share was accepted as a ... ‘stylised fact’ of economic growth. As industrialised countries became more prosperous, the total incomes both of workers and of capital owners grew at almost exactly the same rate, and the division of national income between labour and capital therefore remained constant over a long period of time, with only minor fluctuations... [R]ecent decades have seen a downward trend for the labour share in a majority of countries for which data are available.”



“How do we share experiences, align strategies and, where applicable, implement joint programmes to deal with the challenge of corruption?”

In 25 advanced economies, real income for households in the lower part of the income distribution was, in 2014, actually lower than in 2005, affecting about 500 million people. (Anu Madgavkar, Project Syndicate, September 7, 2016). If life expectancy were to be used as the ultimate measure of the human condition, the trend among blue-collar white workers in the United States tells a harrowing story. While in 1970, they trailed higher-income men of the same age by five years of life, the gap has now widened to about 15 years. (Edward Luce of *Financial Times*, 2016/10/10).

The fact of the matter is that attempts, in the recent period, at lifting the minimum wage have not reversed the broader trend towards growing inequality.

Many young people and women are able to take advantage of the advances in technology and the opportunities presented by the global economy. But the majority of these, across both the developed and developing countries, are being left behind. Many are not in employment, education or training (the NEETS, as they are called in the United Kingdom). These are the so-called *hittistes* in Tunisia, the *shabab atileen* of Egypt, the *freeters* of Japan and the *mileuristas* of Spain, representing a “...failure ... of young people to find a place in society ... [and] of society ... to harness the energy, intelligence and enthusiasm of the next generation”. (Peter Coy of *Bloomberg Businessweek*, 2011/02/02).

What is the moral of this quasi-treatise on inequality, you may ask.

It should be expected that when societies are faced with such stark realities, the victims will naturally demand their pound of flesh from the tables of privilege. It is the response of leaders to such social anomie that is of relevance to the global order and the way geopolitics is playing out today. While left political insurgencies within the establishment have had their impact, the fact of the matter is that, in many countries of the North, it is the jingoists who have carried the day. Some prominent leaders within the private sector (in companies such as EL Rothschild, Unilever and McKinsey & Company) have expressed alarm at the declining legitimacy of the current system of the capitalist market. Indeed, in the words of *Financial Times* journalist Martin Wolf: “If the natural tendency of our economies is towards ever-rising rent extraction and inequality, with all its dire social and political results, we need to respond in a thoughtful and determined way”. (FT 2018/06/27).

However, as the Russians are wont to say, Vashka the Cat continues eating: the majority within the Western political and business elite remain inured to this general crisis.

Because they are incapable of addressing the fundamental question about the distribution of income, some political leaders have taken protectionism and an aggressive mercantilism to unprecedented heights. Economic sanctions are invoked as a tool of industrial policy, to prevent targeted countries from pursuing innovation-driven strategies, and even to manage commodity trade and prices. Chauvinism is presented as the solution to uncontrolled migration. Militarism in geopolitics becomes the stock-in-trade. The security-industrial complex – an evolution of the military-industrial complex, now combined with the intelligence community – confounds issues pertaining to the threat of terrorism; it forages everywhere in search of tensions to justify regional conflicts, and it corrals policy-makers into submitting to its gluttony for resources.

In brief, the global political and economic system is in poly-crisis. The dearth of strategic leadership creates the very real possibility that humanity can stumble into a meltdown. To paraphrase Bertolt Brecht, the bitch that bore the beast of war is in heat again. (*The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, 1941).

The fundamental question is whether the BRICS community is capable of positing an alternative, and what role the BRICS Network University can play in that regard.

It is gratifying that, as is in the nature of institutions

of higher learning, the Network University intends to go beyond research and teaching on energy, computer sciences, climate change and similar issues. Against the backdrop of discredited establishment social sciences on a global scale, matters of the political economy and the variety of issues raised by Civil BRICS do, hopefully, feature prominently in the education curriculum. The concerns identified by the BRICS Civil Society Forum include such matters as inclusive economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and labour relations.

In addition, within the context of the BRICS Strategy for Economic Partnership, there are many current challenges that require intellectual application. For instance, should it not be a matter of concern that the indicators of the combined relevance of BRICS countries to one another, have, in recent years, not been impressive – thus impacting on how collectively our countries can become less dependent on cyclical trends and political whims in other parts of the world? According to some estimates, intra-BRICS trade declined between 2013 and 2017, and the proportion of that trade has, in fact, levelled off. (Jeremy Stevens, Standard Bank Research, 2018/06/26).

Given the large infrastructure projects under way, including the One Belt, One Road initiative, what opportunities attach to such projects for the BRICS partners? This applies critically to the manufacturing of supplies, especially for BRICS partners – such as South Africa – which are endeavouring to industrialise and expand job opportunities.

How do we share experiences, align strategies and, where applicable, implement joint programmes to deal with the challenge of corruption? Indeed, our seriousness in dealing with this matter will be measured by concrete action to implement the programme of the BRICS Anti-Corruption Working Group. In this regard, it is appropriate to refer to the Joint Declaration from last year's summit:

"Keenly aware of the negative impact of corruption on sustainable development, we support the efforts to enhance BRICS anti-corruption co-operation... We further acknowledge that illegal flow of the proceeds of corruption impairs economic development and financial stability... We acknowledge that corruption, including illicit money and financial flows, and ill-gotten wealth stashed in foreign jurisdictions, is a global challenge which may impact negatively on economic growth and

sustainable development." (BRICS 2017 Summit Declaration)

Contained in the postulations that I have made is yet another assumption: that the BRICS Network University intends to pursue trans-disciplinarity in knowledge generation and dissemination. This will help to ensure integration of the various strands of knowledge and lend an organising philosophy to our educational endeavours.

It is not a matter of arrogance to assert that the lived experience of our nations comprises a large body of knowledge that can stand humanity in good stead. This pertains, variously and collectively, to:

- historical civilisations and the philosophies underpinning them, including the management of international relations;
- efforts at industrialisation and the extrication of hundreds of millions from abject poverty;
- successful programmes to deal with inequality;
- efforts to construct more humane societies founded on principles other than the rapacious licensing of unregulated markets;
- pursuit of social cohesion in vast societies with a multiplicity of diversities;
- sustenance of institutions of legitimate governance, even under conditions of extreme stress.

The central message I wish to communicate this evening is that the Network University should be at the centre of mastery of natural sciences and theorisation of social relations, so BRICS can occupy its deserved place in global discourse on the improvement of the human condition. This we should do in pursuit of the BRICS's self-interest and in defence of global multilateralism.

In other words, the appeal for activism and leadership does not amount to a clarion call for BRICS autarky. Rather, we need to locate ourselves at the core of the global efforts to redefine the organising philosophy towards a just and equitable world order. Only in this way will the impulse towards global multi-polarity, human advancement and social solidarity become a material force.

Like all of you, I am of the firm conviction that, among all the BRICS institutions, the Network University has the potential to take pride of place, and it should claim it rather than waiting for it to be delivered from on high.

02



Placing University Institutions at Centre of BRICS and its Success

By Professor Ari Sitas, chairperson of the South African BRICS Think Tank (SABTT)

I speak today with a sense of caution because the very university as an institution is in question: student and staff disquiet has questioned its purpose, its character, its role and mandates, and its curricula.

On this tip of Africa, the issues of its relevance to society and market, to a post-apartheid project and criticisms of its West-centrism have animated many of us and have polarised opinion. And our power elites are polarised too: one is looking towards an American Ivy League for excellence and inspiration; another is looking towards the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the BRICS system for hope and an alternative. We are caught in a liminal space of indecision, inertia and suspicion.

I wouldn't be here if I did not believe that the BRICS initiative is a game-changer in the world system and that the BRICS Network University is not a vital midwife for this change! But I am cautious because I do understand the power and prestige of the existing world system of higher education.

And, since higher education has been the most rapidly expanding area of our modern times, with student numbers growing exponentially the world over, it has become the indispensable marker of development and a serious competitor for public resources. This has led to its prowess (however measured) being seen as a precondition for economic and social upliftment and not its consequence – in the old ways, it was economy, then education.

BRICS Think Tanks Council meeting and Academic Forum: 20 priorities

I am also speaking today on the back of a very successful BRICS Think Tanks Council meeting and Academic Forum in Johannesburg. We have even surprised ourselves

about how much we have learnt from each other five years after our formation.

As it was South Africa's turn to lead, we introduced a range of issues appropriate to our national priorities, of which 20 crystallised into proposals. They were then sifted through, debated, refined and endorsed by all. Even if half of them are endorsed by Track I processes and the impending BRICS summit, we will consider them a major developmental breakthrough.

It was no surprise that such a gathering of thinkers and academics would come up with proposals that fell squarely within the ambit of your initiatives and priorities as representatives of university systems. No less than eight of the proposals will have to involve co-operation between you and will demand leadership and stewardship from within the university system. They will demand the same seriousness of application as occurred with the development of the New Development Bank.

No one disagrees that high-level thinking cannot occur without you; yet many doubters in government are not yet convinced: they keep on pointing to a new mantra that not all knowledge and knowledge projects are the preserve of university systems these days. That is not an incorrect perception about knowledge these days, but there is a rider: although not all, most of it still is!

Yet our task will be harder than the financial and economic networks in BRICS because the beacon of culture (educational, creative and scientific labour) is located North. It has been hard-wired on the world's map to shine on the North, in the interests of the North. This cannot be easily dismissed through subtle discursive manoeuvres: it has been an achievement that took centuries. It occurred during the long ascendance

of Europe as a hegemon in the world system. Yes, it emerged through foraging, settlement and colonialism. Our Latin American friends understand the enduring forms of what they have called the “coloniality of power”, but it is not only reducible to that alone. If we study closely its hierarchies and the mimicry they demand of us, but also the content of the knowledge they have produced, we can see how it was perfected by the United Kingdom in the late 19th century with its criteria of excellence, its canons, its methodologies as a major civilisational marker.

The merger between Newton and Shakespeare was very much a Victorian achievement and the midwife for the birth or transformation of our own systems. Yes, there were French and Dutch and Iberian variations, and yes, Humboldt increased its nuance. We were left since then with the necessity of imitation.

In short, what that high imperial moment achieved was the coupling of two dimensions that constituted British hegemony: material production, exchange and circulation of commodities with the prowess of the cultural (education, creativity and science). The USA picked up the relay baton after World War II and took it to new heights of achievement. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, one would have expected a decisive new hegemon in the world. But instead, the world is out of joint, and there is a major uncoupling at work.

The energy around material production, exchange and circulation has moved south and east, and BRICS countries are in the eye of such trade winds, but the “cultural” has remained north and has become the north’s competitive advantage. I do not need to give you the figures from UNESCO and from the World Science and Social Science Reports as you should have them at your fingertips.

Economic prosperity by BRICS for, and with, Africa

For us on this continent, both processes are quite stark: imagine Africa as a country with provinces existing in a world of continents/countries with their provinces. By now, Africa’s exports to Asia are four times the exports to Europe, and exports within Africa’s provinces are approaching Europe. This is a marked change from the 1900s to the 1970s.

In terms of imports, trade with Asia is three times that of Europe where African provinces have already overtaken her. America is shrinking from the horizon, with the province of Brazil making its significant first entry. Left to itself, this process will continue unabated. The world economy is being

“The energy around material production, exchange and circulation has moved south and east, and BRICS countries are in the eye of such trade winds ...”

powered by new emerging powers within the BRICS domain.

But the cultural? If there is any doubt, the following facts from UNESCO and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) from 2017 are quite decisive. The USA receives close to one million (907 257) foreign students a year. It dispatches only 68 580 outside its borders, 7.16% that is in relation to incoming ones. Most outgoing students go to Europe. The highest BRICS destination for US students is South Africa at a meagre 1 339.

By contrast, 46.8% of foreign students in the USA come from BRICS countries, with China at 291 083 and India at 112 714, and the rest – Brazil at 13 349, Russia at 5 203 and South Africa at 1 779 – holding up the rear. The United Kingdom, also a cherished destination, receives 430 687 foreign students.

If we were to focus on BRICS countries, China, India and Brazil differ from Russia and South Africa. The former are student-sending countries; the latter are student-receiving countries. China is particularly important: it sends 847 259 students and receives 137 527. The percentage of incoming to outgoing students is better than the USA’s and stands at 16.2%. Only 8.3% of outgoing students go to BRICS universities. The majority, as we said, go to the USA, followed by the United Kingdom and Australia.

India’s percentage of incoming to outgoing students is similar to China’s at 16.08% (278 383 out, 44 766 in). Only 12.6% go to BRICS universities. The majority go US, Australia and Canada, with Britain just below that!

Brazil sends 43 438 and receives 19 855 – a 45.7% ratio of incoming to outgoing students – much higher than India and China. Yet only 1% go to BRICS countries. The majority go to the US, Portugal, France and Germany. The largest number

of incoming students come from Angola. The rest come from Brazil's South American region.

Russia and South Africa have the opposite demographic. Russia sends 56 915 abroad but receives 243 752. That equates to 428%! Exactly the opposite from the above. The majority come from the region save 6.6% from BRICS countries, primarily from China and India. There is only a miniscule number going to BRICS destinations.

South Africa is at 574% with only 7 544 going out, and 43 305 coming in. The overwhelming majority are from the region and the broader African continent (with Zimbabwe topping the bill); very few come from BRICS countries, the US, the UK and Australia.

All I am hinting at is that the BRICS University is perhaps the most far-reaching and humbling initiative yet: to agree to a New Development Bank is easier once consensus is reached; the consequences are moral and technical. Creating a new higher education system that facilitates co-operation, academic and student exchanges and research is a daunting task: systems have histories, forms of heritage, ideologies of success and failure, but we also share a lack of past in-depth co-operation.

It is with this in mind that in 2015 we established a pilot project, through the National Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, to gauge the prospects of strengthening academic co-operation. Already we were encouraging programmes such as African Pathways, and South to South corridors of joint research and student mobility. The pilot project involved two workshops: one with academic funding agencies and two with deans of Humanities and Social Sciences from the top-ranked universities in our domain.

In the former case, only four countries were represented: the Russian Academy of Science, the National Research Foundation of South Africa, the Indian Council for Social Science Research and Brazil's CNP (comprehensive national power). Unfortunately, the Chinese Academy of Social Science could not make it. The response was unequivocal. Not only were they ready to work together for joint funding streams, but the ideas of priority areas were overwhelming.

In turn, the deans of Shanghai University, Jawaharlal Nehru University, the University of São Paulo, the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo, the University of Rio de Janeiro, Lomonosov Moscow State University and the universities of Cape Town, the Witwatersrand and Pretoria went beyond any expectations, too, to define the immediate and most plausible

steps for the achievement of that. What the Universities Network is proposing will be enthusiastically supported by faculties in the Humanities and the Social Sciences.

What is more important, though, was the reflection that underpinned their excitement. Yes, it was something new and uncharted, but also it gave them "voice". There were four areas of reflection that are vital for your deliberations:

A call for self-determination and normative commons?

Self-determination: all were disquieted about being considered a "periphery" of any kind. Brazil has been grappling with the meaning of self-determination since 1822; Russia since the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars, and especially in the rise of a student movement in the 1890s, which culminated in the withdrawal from World War I and the Russian Revolution; India since about then, until the fruition of the 1947 moment of independence; China since the May Fourth Movement and its Long March all the way up to 1949; and Fort Hare's golden generation of the 1930s in South Africa, in its elaborations of what it meant to nurture an African National movement all the way to the 1994 breakthrough.

But self-determination produced and reproduced borders, sovereignty, demands on local knowledge and relevance; the challenge now was how to soften the borders of academic co-operation within the BRICS domain. How could education enhance the effort to turn difference – and we are very different formations – into friendly forms of "otherness"?

Normative commons: how do we arrive at a neo-Gandhian parlance, where the "other" is "wonder full" – that s/he is not exterminable (and therefore all such pasts were regrettable); s/he is not use-able, exploitable, a piece of chattel (and therefore all such pasts were regrettable); and how the "other" is not a "Non-Us" (and therefore not excludable). In short, education and scholarship needed a new "normative" commons.

Common pasts: By now good archaeological, historical, linguistic and musicological work has re-read our pasts and there are traces of each other everywhere we dig. To misuse a slogan: another past is possible if the Eurocentric narrative of modernity, nurtured by canonical sociology and anthropology, is bracketed away and the interconnections of prior world systems are redrafted, re-constructed and the entanglements before 1500 and after get jointly addressed.

To misuse yet another formulation: We needed an

alternative Contingency Reserve. If another past is possible, so is a multiplicity of futures away from the existing world system – and, like the New Development Bank needs its crisis-busting mechanism (namely, the Contingency Reserve Arrangement), so policy alternatives are needed in times of crisis. There could be many roads to human flourishing.

This was just a sample of the kind of thinking possible in one field of the Academy, the social and human sciences. In conclusion here: our thinkers are ready to go far, but we are at this stage where Europe was before the drafting of the Rome Statute of 1962 that gave birth to the European Commission. In that, too, a great philosopher, Alexandre Kojève, played a leading role. We have to get our own philosophers involved!

So, I have only said two things thus far: that the task ahead will be difficult and that there is appreciation and enthusiasm among the academic leadership of many of our institutions. Now to the proposals...

The proposals entailed a range of entities, from institutes to centres, from networks to programmes, from forums to partnerships. Our Chinese colleagues thought of an overarching concept of a BRICS Academy which could be tasked with a multiplicity of functions, but our Think Tank partners felt that a think tank could not co-ordinate an academy.

The question is: Can a university network?

As it was the turn of South Africa to inaugurate issues, three priorities of national government had to have an echo in our attempted proposals: that it was Nelson Mandela's 100th birthday demanded an effort towards peace and reconciliation; that women's voices were deemed to be vital for any developmental pact demanded a special space for them in the BRICS domain; and finally, that health – and within that, the prevention of diseases that afflict our poor – demanded a proposal for research and development of vaccines for all the diseases that afflict primarily our poor. A centre for all that and to deal with the Zika virus, Ebola, HIV/Aids, malaria, dengue fever and tuberculosis (TB), whether drug-resistant or not, was heavily supported.

To meet new health challenges such as non-communicable diseases, infectious diseases and drug-resistant TB, BRICS should play a greater role in global norm setting and in the global governance of health sector issues. It would be important to explore BRICS co-operation for finding out appropriate

“All I am hinting at is that the BRICS University is perhaps the most far-reaching and humbling initiative yet. . . ”

forms of comprehensive national healthcare systems and contextual-sensitive systems of social protection. We note that sustaining a healthy nation and the provision of basic health services is a precondition for the development of our respective countries. We note, too, that all departments of health in our domain are working closely together towards a health/development consensus, and that in this, the BRICS Think Tanks Council can only play a supportive role.


We therefore recommend the establishment of a vaccination research platform to respond to our communicable and non-communicable disease challenges. Zika, HIV/Aids, TB, malaria and so on, are of vital concern to our domain.

Noting that inclusive development is a priority theme for South Africa's presidency, we proposed the establishment of a Forum on Women's Equality. Such a forum will share experiences on the progress of women-led developments in the economic, social and political life of our respective countries; identify the obstacles to inclusivity in the BRICS domain; and strive to establish a panel of experts on gender equality to contribute to setting up BRICS's own indicator system for evaluating gender equality and enhancing women's economic and social rights under the framework of the BRICS Think Tanks Council.

And now to the areas where the university systems and this Network University become vital:

Hubs: We reaffirmed in Johannesburg that our goal in development is about human flourishing in a prosperous, pacific and mutually respectful world; and we committed ourselves to build a community of shared future for mankind. We also committed ourselves to co-operative programmes to redress inequality in our midst.

To this end, we need to encourage economic development that is smart, labour-absorbing and proactive – and so we propose the establishment of networks of smart manufacturing hubs in the BRICS domain. Such hubs would pool together knowledge, technology and new ideas around constructing new and interconnected economic frontiers. Instead of competing



as industrial societies, we would be thinking together on how to utilise the breakthroughs in the 4th Industrial Revolution, the research and development around it, to enhance our mutual productive powers and our interconnected value chains – and to create new labour-absorbing frontiers backed by partnerships and respect for labour rights.

Academy: The South African presidency of BRICS involves an ambitious Africa Outreach dimension, welcoming participants from important Africa-wide think tanks and institutions who are in our midst. We note the aspirations of the African continent, as set out in the Agenda 2063 document, such as “a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development”. We note, too, that the most vital post-colonial ambition was to turn the continent’s abundant resource base into virtuous industrialisation and self-sufficiency (the Lagos Plan of the 1980s, Africa’s Accelerated Industrialisation Plan of the late 2000s).

Noting these two points above, we recommend the establishment of an African Academy for Development and Beneficiation. In this, BRICS countries and BRICS-related tertiary institutions and experts would participate in assisting in the creation and the definition of priorities for such an academy.

Furthermore, it was agreed to work towards establishing a BRICS Astrophysics and Space Research Scientific Committee and a Joint Research and Development Platform.

Centres: Development is based on sustainable and environmentally sensitive protocols; on the fact that energy is regarded both as a source and a driver of responsible development; and that our economies are industrialised and, in many instances, resource-extractive. We recommend the creation of a BRICS Centre for Policy Research on Energy, Innovation and Sustainable Development as a flagship project of the BRICS Think Tank, the BRICS University system and our respective departments of energy.

Programmes: We note that food security and making agriculture economically viable for small and marginal farmers has been placed high on the agenda of BRICS governmental co-operation. We note, too, that vast movements of de-peasantation have evolved over the last three decades that threaten the food security of our urban populations. Noting these two points, decisive planning and action are necessary. We recommend the development of a co-operative Food Security-Driven SMME Programme which would link

agrarian production with small-scale manufacturing to service the nutritional integrity of our people. Small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) cannot be forgotten, given their role in job creation.

Such a programme should also be targeted towards promoting supplier development and the participation of SMMEs in the BRICS countries’ value chains where possible, as well as the exchange of best practices on SMME development. Furthermore, we note that the planting and beneficiation of indigenous and bio-diverse plants, trees and fruit trees for nutritional purposes needs to be based on sound indigenous knowledge principles, prioritised and linked to land reform, urban renewal, small business development and value-added beneficiation. Taking into account everything from the research needed to the stocking up of seeds, to their proliferation and maintenance, this would be a major job-creating exercise, while at the same time, it would facilitate the resilience of other flora and fauna.

Therefore, the delegates recommend and support the initiation of an Indigenous Tree, Fruit Tree and Plant Beneficiation Programme in the BRICS domain with the aim of furthering indigenous knowledge, technologies and practices.

Our co-operation ought to be about prioritising our productive, creative and scientific powers. It has to translate into strengthening the BRICS University and post-school systems. We note that there is a major encounter of such systems around the future of BRICS higher education collaboration. We note, too, that to be drivers of innovation and at the forefront of new technological revolutions, our systems have to become co-operative and innovative. And we also note that the emergence of big data and advanced analytics, the ever-rising importance of the internet as an important catalyst for development and sharing of ‘new’ knowledge, as well as the increased integration of digital modelling in the manufacturing spaces, have emerged as a function of information and a ‘new’ world dictated by complex systems besetting the 4th Industrial Revolution.

In this case, we are called to make the realities of this new revolution integral to the post-school higher education sector. It will reinforce synchronised cross-national curricula to facilitate knowledge-sharing and collaborative efforts in universities and vocational training institutions in the BRICS.

Institutes: The establishment of an advanced study international institute on South American, African and

Eurasian social challenges. The leadership of each would rotate in a way still to be decided.

Our encounters in China set a high standard in understanding the necessity for new norms of global governance to achieve a pacific new world system. We note that South Africa has a vital interest in this as the country can reduce the moral deficit of the existing world system and strengthen the visibility of our humanistic heritage from Mahatma Gandhi and Sol Plaatje all the way to Nelson Mandela around the issues of justice, restitution, peace and reconciliation in a world torn by violence and war. We note, too, that our leaderships are engaged in prioritising peacekeeping and building important instruments for economic and social progress for the world at large and the African continent and the Middle East in particular.

There are peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction efforts in various parts of the world. Hence, all efforts should be directed at intensifying our peacekeeping and peace-building initiatives in a war-torn world, with institution-building forming the central pillar of our operations in the quest to achieve sustained peace-building outcomes for a prosperous future. Given that our think tank networks, scientists and scholars are, and will be, involved in such endeavours, we recommend the establishment of a BRICS Institute of Peace Research as a flagship project of the BRICS University system.

Networks: The protection and enhancement of our commons has been agreed upon. Great efforts are underway to enhance a broader African biodiversity and ecosystems integrity by strengthening responsible forms of development, nurturing green technologies and prioritising indigenous knowledge-based solutions to chronic socio-natural challenges. We note the importance of addressing the global challenges of food and global security, environmental governance, ecosystems services, climate change and human rights. We note, too, the emergence of new initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance as a positive contribution to mitigate climate change.

Noting the two points above, we recommend the creation of (a) a smart climate early warning system; (b) a green and blue economy as well as a resilient ecosystems network; and (c) a knowledge hub for sustainable forms of urban renewal.

For us, finally, a major concern was whether the BRICS initiative could help the African continent to remove the constraints that came to block development since the 1500s and in the long term, made many of its countries vassal states

“..we need to encourage economic development that is smart, labour-absorbing and proactive – and so we propose the establishment of networks of smart manufacturing hubs in the BRICS domain...”

of the World Bank: indebted, poor and caught in a cycle of under-development. We knew that if we were to fly, we needed a strong African body with South American and Asian (nay, Eurasian) wings in conversation with the North. We knew that we had to establish African pathways, imitating some successful tri-continental global study programmes that facilitate student mobilities and create communities of joint scholarship. We knew that university administrations would be recalcitrant if lavish resources were not coming their way and that nothing would move without Western sponsorship. We insisted that an Erasmus-like student exchange programme would be possible. We took the first tentative steps towards it.

We see this initiative as a catalyst that will absorb and overtake the little that has been achieved and serve as an incubator of new hubs, centres, institutes and programmes that will respond to our enormous developmental challenges.

To return to the beginning: we are tasked to do all this at a time when the university as an institution, in terms of rankings and finances, preoccupy society the most. International co-operation translates into hefty income from foreign students, and managerial protocols and benefits trump the vision and commitment required to bring about a different world. The centripetal forces of the academic magnet pull us away from a BRICS vision, but the centrifugal ones attract us towards it. It is time we inaugurated a new magnetic field appropriate to the emerging aspirations of our people. We are not driftwood; we come from a long way back. We are a higher education system responsible for more than 40% of the world's people. **BR**

TIME TO TALK?

We'd love to hear from you!



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FENG SHAOLEI

The evolution of the Sino-Russia relationship: a perspective from the July meeting between Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin

B



THE SHANGHAI SPIRIT ADVOCATED BY EURASIAN ALLIANCE THE SHANGHAI CO-OPERATION ORGANIZATION PROMOTES INTER-REGIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND MUTUAL BENEFIT, AND IN SO DOING, IS HELPING TO ALIGN CHINA'S BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE WITH RUSSIA'S GREATER EURASIAN PARTNERSHIP PROJECT.

China's President Xi Jinping and Russia's President Vladimir Putin held talks during the BRICS Summit in Johannesburg. The two leaders, who have met many times and are said to share a close relationship, exchanged views on the current international situation and major issues of common concern.

While the media did not report details of their exchange, the words of Samuel Charap, political analyst and a senior fellow for Russia and Eurasia at the Washington-based International Institute

for Strategic Studies, hold sway. In 2017, Charap said frequent consultations between two leaders about major issues indicate that "both sides devote significant effort and political capital to managing their bilateral relations effectively. They take a pragmatic, behind-the-scenes approach to resolving disputes and publicly stress the positive elements in the relationship."

In this context, the current Sino-Russian relationship shows five important characteristics:



Russian President Vladimir Putin (R) meets with Chinese President Xi Jinping (L) at the BRICS Summit July 26, 2018 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

gettyimages
Mikhail Svetlov

01 During his meeting with Putin on 24 May, China's Vice-President Wang Qishan told him how Xi was looking forward to meeting the Russian president again to jointly chart the course of bilateral relations and of the Shanghai Co-operation Organization (SCO). This suggests that economic co-operation and strengthening bilateral ties is on both leaders' agendas. That Putin and Xi were re-elected as heads of state while drawing their own domestic blueprints is another common factor at play.

02 The co-operation between China and Russia is more than a matter of securing bilateral ties. The countries are close neighbours geographically, have complementary economic structures and are in a similar stage of development. Over the past 30 years, their political and trade partnership has developed in a meaningful way, providing important guarantees to continue along this mutually beneficial path. Unlike in the past, when China and Russia would face a new situation brewing over a long period, the pace of change has speeded up, requiring both countries to promote their economic and social development strategies faster and with greater clarity of vision. It is different from the 1980s, 1990s and even the beginning of this century when neo-liberalism, a free-market economy and social democracy dominated, while state influence was weakened. In the long term, it is likely that the two opposing systems of government power and free-market policies will come to rely on and support each other. However, this will entail a complex learning process and will take time.

03 Given the similarities between China and Russia, their relationship will surely be pushed forward primarily by government power – although market forces and various societal influences will also be influential. In other words, the bilateral partnership will not only need support from large structural projects, but also via more diverse civil participation. It will not only consider “market effects” as influencing policy, but also focus more on both countries’ long-term developmental requirements.

Exchanges between the two leaders continue at the highest level, with Xi having recently called Putin his “most intimate friend”. Moreover, there has been a marked increase in the youth of both countries, especially students, learning each other’s language. This bodes well for future co-operation.

In addition to advancing a series of big projects – a number of roads and bridges are under joint construction – both countries plan to expand and diversify their trade deals. For example, Putin recently spoke about undertaking urban construction, including aircraft building,

machinery manufacture and possible joint ventures in the chemical industry. This is a very encouraging development plan as it opens the way to more opportunities for long-term co-operation. It also presents China with a chance to gain more in-depth knowledge about the modernisation processes going on in Russia. And China can also teach its neighbour a thing or two: the China International Import Expo, which takes place in Shanghai from 5 to 10 November, is a good chance for Russia to expand its imports from China. Enterprises from more than 100 countries are expected to present their products, services and ideas at the expo – and, in so doing, provide new trade channels and strengthen co-operation. This can only benefit both countries and the world at large.

04 The Sino-Russia bilateral relationship is supported by stable regional co-operation structures, which may result in a new model for globalisation – though this will depend on the creation and maintenance of strong regional development frameworks. With emerging economies working together to reshape existing regional policy frameworks comes the ever-increasing possibility of new ways of doing business being entrenched.

However, the transition from the old to the new frameworks will require a “tread carefully” approach as it’s a move into the unknown. There are no set conditions for such a revolutionary situation and competition for dominance among major powers could well ensue, as US political scientist Graham Allison proposed when he coined the phrase “Thucydides trap” – referring to a rising power which threatens to displace an established power, making war the inevitable result.

This outcome is questionable. Such a transition need not necessarily be managed through conflict. The world is so large that interest realignment can be arranged without having to do battle.

It is also questionable whether it is possible to go back to the type of agreement reached at the Yalta Conference, which achieved a transition through traditional geopolitics and the division of spheres of influence. (The Yalta Conference, which took place in 1945,

marked the second wartime meeting of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin and US President Franklin D. Roosevelt. During the conference, the three leaders agreed to demand Germany’s unconditional surrender and began plans for a post-war world.)

05 The rise of emerging countries has brought with it renewed attention to Westphalian sovereignty in the contemporary world, whereby each nation state is legally accorded exclusive sovereignty over its territory and domestic affairs. This renders a “return to Yalta” unrealistic.

It is equally questionable whether the challenge of rising countries from the non-European and non-Western world can be dealt with in the same way that Europe has dealt with a “rising Germany”. Although one can learn from these historical situations, supra-state and supra-sovereign integration has encountered much criticism and political backlash in recent times. In addition, since current emerging economies are still reliant on Westphalian sovereignty and emphasise the importance of nation-building, it is not appropriate to handle the complicated regional and global restructuring through a “one-size-fits-all” approach.

In such circumstances, the Shanghai Spirit advocated by the SCO represents a new model for regional co-operation, based on core values of mutual trust and benefit, equality, consultations, respect for cultural diversity and aspirations for common development – in short, a win-win free trade network. This new way of doing business is being tried through the facilitation of China’s Belt and Road Initiative and Russia’s Greater Eurasian Partnership. These projects are indicative of a strategy, moving eastward, to establish a non-Western geopolitical group with Russia and China at its core. Moreover, given this transformation, the global significance of the Far East and Siberia is being enhanced.

The construction of a new world order begins with these various processes in mind. **BR**

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Q&A

The Brazil Paradox

BRICS ACADEMIC REVIEW CAUGHT UP WITH BRAZILIAN ECONOMIST ADHEMAR MINEIRO ON THE SIDELINES OF THE CIVIL BRICS: PEOPLE'S FORUM, WHICH WAS HELD IN JOHANNESBURG ON 26 JUNE. A TWO-DAY MEETING, ITS AIM WAS TO PRESENT DIVERSE CIVIL SOCIETY VOICES TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT IN THE LEAD-UP TO THE DELIBERATIONS THAT TOOK PLACE AT THE 10TH BRICS SUMMIT.

Mineiro represents Rede Brasileira pela Integração dos Povos, also known as REBRIP (the Brazilian Network for the Integration of People), a coalition of social movements, social organisations (including NGOs) as well as made unions in Brazil. He has done so since 2003.

BAR: How effective is the labour movement in Brazil?

Mineiro: It is still a powerful movement, but it is confronting an unfriendly government at the moment, following the 2016 parliamentary coup that resulted in the removal from office of president Dilma Rousseff. Labour still has the power to resist and to negotiate within sectors. Currently, the labour movements related to state-owned enterprises have led the fight against the privatisation of our

strategic sectors, such as the energy sector. In the past two years, however, we've seen a waning of the labour movement's influence; it is not as powerful as before.

BAR: Where does BRICS fit in all of this?

Mineiro: There is a huge debate about foreign policy going on in Brazil. You must understand that BRICS in Brazil came in two ways. One way occurred around the beginning of former president Lula da Silva's tenure in 2003, when the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum, known as IBSA, was established to promote international co-operation among the three countries. [Its objectives were also to increase trade opportunities among the three countries, as well as to facilitate the trilateral exchange of information, technologies and skills to

complement one another's strengths.] To this end, the tripartite grouping has focused on a number of common problems and shared their respective national policies as examples to help one another. For example, in Brazil we have a policy on minimum wage; India has state-owned regional development banks – this is very interesting to Brazil and by India sharing its experience of these banks, it may be something Brazil can adopt if it applies to the Brazilian context. So, all three countries get to share their experiences to see if something from another country can work in theirs. This is the first way that BRICS was introduced.

The other way is when we had the financial crisis in 2008. Some countries were called to assist those countries that were severely affected by the crisis. US states and countries in Europe were



Adhemar Mineiro

called upon to inject money into financial institutions. The BRIC agenda then came up, before South Africa was part of the group.

BAR: Brazil's participation in BRICS has been somewhat limited – why so?

Mineiro: The new government is opposed to the diplomatic aspect of BRICS. It appears to see value in continuing relations with Western countries and increasing trade with them, rather than spending all its energy negotiating with Third World countries. This seems to be the new government's attitude. On the other hand, the financial aspect of BRICS, which includes the establishment of the New Developmental Bank, is of interest to Brazil. A key point is that BRICS includes China, which is currently Brazil's main trading partner in terms of both imports and exports. China is also the main investor in Brazil, so the government does not want any conflict with China.

It looks as if the new government wants

in October, and presidential candidates will have to declare their positions on foreign policy and on BRICS. It is hoped that Brazil's position will be clear post elections. Also, bear in mind that there are other issues making this scenario more complicated, such as the current trade wars between China and the US.

I predicted that at the 10th BRICS Summit, the Brazilian delegation would be very low profile as they would not have the mandate to take any strong positions or make strategic decisions, given the upcoming general elections. It was likely that the main points of the agenda would be postponed for the next meeting, which Brazil will be hosting next year.

BAR: Do you think that by not having a position Brazil is not fully exploiting the benefits of being part of BRICS?

Mineiro: Brazil has been experiencing a political crisis over the past two years. I would liken the country to a boat that doesn't know where it wants to go; in the

its not having had a revolutionary past like Russia and China, being socialist. Brazil's influence may have waned somewhat, but it still enjoys political prominence within the group.

BAR: What is your ideal scenario going into the next decade of BRICS?

Mineiro: I think at this moment BRICS has a problem of legitimization. Initially, there was hope for the group, not only in terms of challenging the US hegemony and trying to find new trade and economic paths in this changing world, but also in terms of bringing social transformation. Time has passed and nothing that different has been formulated, so scepticism abounds and there are groups within the BRICS member states which are very critical about this bloc. Some groups are saying that BRICS is no different from the Bretton Woods institutions, namely the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. If BRICS fails to generate hope among social movements, that means it is losing legitimization. An important task for the bloc to focus on is finding legitimization, not only internationally but also within their respective countries.

BAR: How can BRICS achieve legitimization?

Mineiro: The different member states have to approach the various social organisations within their countries and ask for their input. This is the first step towards giving people new hope and making them feel like they are part of the group. For example, why should the New Development Bank finance old economic infrastructure, such as roads, just to make sure that countries are enabled to continue exporting materials? Why not finance small-scale agriculture or social infrastructure projects to do with sanitation, health and education? Why not activate its policies on small business by connecting the five markets? Why not integrate tourism, or establish a research institution for BRICS, or a university? If people can see such partnerships, and see them as being beneficial for the future, they will be more supportive of BRICS. **BR**

“An important task for the bloc to focus on is finding legitimization, not only internationally but also within their respective countries.”

- Adhemar Mineiro

to be far from conversations related to South-South co-operation [this refers to the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries, also known as countries of the Global South], but at the same time it can't exit BRICS because of China. The government has contradictory feelings regarding BRICS, and because of that Brazil does not participate fully in the group. This inactivity is seen in Brazil not offering proposals within the group.

BAR: Do you foresee any change in Brazil's position in the future?

Mineiro: Maybe the better option is that we are scheduled to hold general elections

amidst of the current political turmoil, it is torn. With this going on, a clear position can't be expressed, specifically at a multilateral level, because you don't have that support internally. Because of that, Brazil is not exploring possibilities or trying to derive benefits from being part of this group.

All the decisions that will be made from now onwards will be decisive for the future of Brazil as a nation, but also for the future of Brazil as a member of BRICS. Brazil was very important at the start of the group, both in terms of bringing more political balance, especially where South Africa-India ties were concerned, and because of

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SOUTH AFRICA TOURISM TOP BUSINESS DESTINATION

ABOUT WRITER

Bulelwa Dayimani is a freelance journalist, who is passionate about politics, women's issues and telling African stories. She is a journalism graduate from Walter Sisulu University. She has contributed as a writer and an assistant digital editor for a number of media companies that include Ndalo Media and SA's biggest media company Naspers/Media24

Why SA continues to be one of the top business destinations

IN A RECENT REPORT RELEASED BY THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS AND CONVENTION ASSOCIATION (ICCA) – A BODY WHICH REPRESENTS THE WORLD'S LEADING SUPPLIERS IN THE HANDLING, TRANSPORT AND ACCOMMODATION OF INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS – SOUTH AFRICA WAS NAMED THE TOP DESTINATION FOR MEETINGS, INCENTIVES, CONFERENCES AND EXHIBITIONS (MICE). THIS MAY NOT COME AS A SURPRISE, SINCE THE COUNTRY HAS HOSTED MANY MICE EVENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR. WE LOOK AT WHY SOUTH AFRICA IS STILL REGARDED AS ONE OF THE TOP BUSINESS DESTINATIONS AND AT HOW BRICS IS BOOSTING BUSINESS TRAVEL ON OUR SHORES.

COMPILED BY: BULELWA DAYIMANI



In a recent report by Rand Merchant Bank, the country was ousted from its number one ranking as the best place for investment; the honours went to Egypt instead. Nevertheless, when it comes to business events and travel, South Africa remains the top destination.



In the past year alone, more than three million people passed through our ports of entry, according to the latest Tourism and Migration Survey by Statistics South Africa.

While the majority of tourists who visit the country come for leisure, the rest come for business.

In an interview in 2017, the then tourism minister, Tokozile Xasa, said South Africa was one of the world's top 10 long-haul destinations for hosting international meetings and conferences, and that the country hosted a million delegates every year. She also said the average business traveller spent seven days in the country.

"These conferences generate a direct economic benefit for our country, which includes what delegates spend on hotel accommodation, food and beverages, and souvenirs," said Xasa.

"There is an indirect benefit as well. The business delegates whom we host annually return home to sell our country to others by word of mouth, and indeed, many will return here on holiday. Some may consider investing in South Africa."

A major factor that has been earmarked as a driver for growth in the business sector is South Africa's ability to successfully host prestigious events, thanks to its world-class conference venues and hotels.

Business travel has also been boosted by BRIC countries, whose citizens spend R3 billion a year when visiting our shores, according to accounting firm PwC. In

“Since the easing of visa rules, South Africa has seen an increase in the number of visitors from Brazil.”

an article published by multimedia news syndication service African News Agency, PwC states that people from Brazil, China, India and Russia visit the country mainly for business purposes.

In the past year, the number of tourists from these countries has gone up by 6.1%, thanks to the easing of visa restrictions within BRICS countries.

Speaking to online travel site Traveller 24, Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom said there was a big opportunity for a growth in tourism among BRICS nations.

"We see huge potential tourism growth between BRICS nations, especially with China and India, considering their population size and economic growth. In fact, China has surpassed the United States as the world's biggest outbound tourism source market, with about 130

million Chinese travellers globally. India is also growing fast, with the UN World Tourism Organisation (the United Nations agency responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism) predicting that by 2020, there will be 50 million outbound Indian tourists," Hanekom said.

Hanekom said South Africa's visa regulations had had a negative effect on tourism – and on business travel in particular.

"The visa regulations between South Africa and China, as well as India, are stifling growth in tourism, not just to our country, but for our tourists and business people travelling to these two countries ... For South Africa, the BRICS nations of China, India and Brazil make up three of our top 10 tourism source markets. This illustrates the considerable importance of these countries, especially because outbound tourism is growing at such a pace from these nations," he said.

Since the easing of visa rules, South Africa has seen an increase in the number of visitors from Brazil.

Eight reasons for doing business in SA

01 World-class infrastructure

South Africa has world-class infrastructure – including a modern transport network, sophisticated telecommunications and superb tourism facilities.

The government has identified massive infrastructure projects as being key to boosting the country's economic growth rate and creating employment, and is spending billions of rands on getting the investment ball rolling.

Our success in hosting the world's largest sporting event, the 2010 Fifa World Cup, has shown that the country is capable of undertaking – and successfully completing – major projects on time.

02 Access to markets

Its position at the southern tip of the continent gives South Africa easy access to the 14 countries in the Southern African Development Community



(SADC), with a combined market of over 250 million people.

The country is also an excellent launchpad to the islands off Africa's east coast, and even the Gulf States and India.

South Africa is a trans-shipment point between the emerging markets of Central and South America and the newly industrialised nations of South and Far East Asia.

Major shipping lanes pass along the South African coastline in the South Atlantic and Indian oceans. The country's seven commercial ports form the largest, best equipped and most efficient network in Africa.

03

The gateway to Africa

Africa, with 200 to 300 million of its people approaching middle-class status, is seen as the next great growth story after China and India.

The McKinsey Global Institute, the research arm of management consulting firm McKinsey & Company, has identified Africa as the world's second-fastest growing region. This growth is "creating substantial new business opportunities" for global companies.

South Africa allows easy access to the other markets of sub-Saharan Africa. It is the economic powerhouse of the continent and is considered a dynamic force in the SADC.

Sharing borders with Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho, its well-developed road and rail links provide the platform and infrastructure for ground transportation deep into sub-Saharan Africa.

South Africa also has the resident



marketing skills and distribution channels to open up commercial ventures into the rest of Africa.

The country has a host of investment incentives and industrial financing interventions to encourage commercial activity. Its trade rules favour a further expansion in its already burgeoning international trade.

The special International Headquarter Company (IHQ) regime is aimed at positioning South Africa as a holding company gateway for foreign multinationals investing into Africa.

04

Trade reform and global strategic alliances

South Africa has trading relationships with more than 200 countries and territories.

In 2011, the country was admitted to

the BRIC group of major developing economies: Brazil, Russia, India and China. The bloc was then renamed BRICS.

In 2015, the BRICS group set up the New Development Bank to help finance the growth of emerging economies. Each of the five countries has a 20% shareholding in the bank, which has an authorised capital investment of US\$100 billion.

The bank was founded by the BRICS member states at their fifth summit, which took place in Brazil in 2014. Launched in 2015, the bank has its headquarters in Shanghai, China. Its first regional office, the Africa Regional Centre, was set up last year in South Africa's commercial hub, Johannesburg.

The BRICS countries also established a Contingent Reserve Agreement, in which they have undertaken to provide financial



support to each other in the event of balance of payment problems.

South Africa also has special relationships with the Southern African Customs Union (Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Swaziland), the SADC and the European Union. It has bilateral agreements with Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

The country has become a key trade and investment partner to China, today a major investor in Africa.

Plans are afoot for the establishment of a continental free trade area to boost commerce within Africa, opening up opportunities for South African companies.

Trade agreements further the aims of government to accelerate growth and industrial development. The International Economic Development Division (ITED), a branch of the Department of Trade and Industry, is responsible for trade negotiations.

05 The cost of doing business in South Africa

South Africa's exchange rate makes it one of the least expensive countries for foreigners to live and do business in – with a first-world infrastructure and high living standards ensuring good value for money.

While energy costs have increased in recent years, the government plans to meet the country's growing energy needs with renewable and efficient sources.

Petroleum prices in South Africa compare favourably with those in other continental markets. Private sector and multinational oil companies refine and

market nearly all imported petroleum products in Southern Africa.

Telecommunications costs are high, but the government is taking steps to ensure that there is cheaper and more widely available bandwidth capacity, while the landing of several submarine fibre-optic cables along both the east and west coasts of Africa has boosted the continent's connection with the rest of the world.

South Africa's corporate tax rate – 28% for the 2016/2017 tax year – compares favourably with tax rates in a number of developing countries. Professional labour costs are far lower than those in developed economies.

06 Ease of doing business in SA

South Africa ranked 82nd out of 190 countries for ease of doing business, according to Doing Business 2018, a report published by the World Bank and International Finance Corporation.

The report is an annual survey of the time, cost and frustration of complying with legal and administrative requirements of doing businesses.

The survey rates the ease of doing business in South Africa as higher than major developing economies such as Brazil (125), India (100) and Nigeria (145). It also scores far above the sub-Saharan African average ranking of xxx (sub's query – I can't find the latest figure for this. Please insert).

All companies planning to do business with the South African government and the general business community must comply with Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) policies. These

aim to redress past imbalances and broaden economic access to members of historically disadvantaged communities.

07 Industrial capability and cutting-edge technology

South Africa's manufacturing output is increasingly technology-intensive.

The high-tech manufacturing sectors – machinery, scientific equipment and motor vehicles – enjoy a growing share of total manufacturing production.

South Africa's technological research and quality standards are world-renowned. The country has developed a number of leading technologies, particularly in the fields of energy and fuels, steel production, deep-level mining, telecommunications and information technology.

08 Competitiveness

South Africa ranked 49th out of 140 countries in the World Economic Forum's 2015-16 Global Competitiveness Index.

Although it has dropped to 61 out of 137 countries in the 2017-18 index, it remains one of the most competitive countries in sub-Saharan Africa, and takes its place among the BRICS members as follows: behind China (27), Russia (38) and India (40), but ahead of Brazil (80).

South Africa's government provides incentives for value-added manufacturing projects, support for industrial innovation, improved access to finance and an enabling environment for small business development.

Industrial development zones have been established in close proximity to major ports and airports, offering world-class infrastructure, dedicated customs support and reduced taxation.

South Africa has a well-developed and regulated competition regime based on best international practice. Competition legislation follows EU, US and Canadian models.

The law places various prohibitions on anti-competitive conduct, restrictive practices (such as price fixing, predatory pricing and collusive tendering) and abuses by "dominant" firms, defined as companies with a market share of 35% or more.

- Additional information: Brand SA

Filler

Icons

R E V I S I T E D



A photo essay of South Africa's iconic women
portrayed by current influencers



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AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Malaika Mahlatsi
as
Albertina Sisulu
(1918~2011)

Albertina Sisulu is a true revolutionary who was guided by her great feelings of love and her strong sense of justice. This year we mark the centenary of the life of a giant of the struggle, Mama Albertina Sisulu, at a crucial time in our democracy, when women in the country and across the world are drowning in the violence of hetero-normativity, suffocated by violent masculinities. We celebrate the life of Ma Sisulu at a time when the world is desperate for the compassion that defines the life and activism of this phenomenal woman. To portray such a woman at this moment in our history, is an honour. She was a nurse and a committed anti-apartheid activist who marched for my freedom in 1956 [to the Union Buildings in the historic anti-pass Women's March] and who, through her foundation focusing on the plight of young children and old people, subordinated herself for the wellbeing of others. It is a reminder to me as a woman that I am capable. Ma Sisulu once said: "Women are the people who are going to relieve us from this oppression and depression." Mama, we have already started, and when we are weak we look to you for guidance, because we will relieve this oppression and depression not only through our efforts, but by continuing to stand on the shoulders of giants like you, revolutionaries who were always guided by great feelings of love.

ABOUT MALAIKA MAHLATSI

Named one of the Top 200 Young South Africans by the Mail & Guardian newspaper in 2015, Malaika is an accomplished writer and social activist. She is a thought leader, a fierce debater and the author of *Memoirs of a Born Free: Reflections on the Rainbow Nation*.

FACEBOOK ICON www.facebook.com/malaika.l.mahlatsi





Whitney Jacobs as Bessie Head (1937~1986)

What an honour it was to do this, and what a spiritual experience, to portray Bessie Head, a South African who is known as Botswana's most influential writer. Her books gave me an important look into the lives of my people; they serve as a reminder of what my people have gone through and of who I am.

Head's style of telling her own story by using other characters, as opposed to a traditional biography, gave me the inspiration to emulate this lesson in my own life. How could I tell my story though helping and empowering other people? How could I live forever through other people? Her struggle with identity and rejection was familiar, a struggle that I have tucked away safely. Not white, not black and in some instances, too brown.

I was interested in why she wrote and in how she was able to write while suffering from poverty, racial segregation and gender discrimination. She was searching for connections and intellectual companionship, always searching.

For most of her life Bessie was a stateless person, and as part of her colourful journey she made her way to my hometown, Port Elizabeth, in the early 1960s. Beyond personal identity, her statelessness was a search for group identity and an African personality. Our paths have finally crossed and there are too many similarities between us – some painful, some powerful.

ABOUT WHITNEY JACOBS

Whitney is best known as the founder of **Employ Me South Africa**, an online recruitment platform that allows job seekers and employers to connect through video link-ups. She also realised that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds lacked the competitive skills required in labour and business to take advantage of the opportunities South Africa has to offer. This led her to establish **Train Me SA**, a subsidiary of **Employ Me South Africa**. **Train Me SA** acts as the implementing agency responsible for facilitating career guidance, interview skills and training programmes.

FACEBOOK ICON www.facebook.com/whitney.jacobs.965





Catherine Constantinides

as

Ruth First

(1925~1982)

As I stepped into the shoes and life of an iconic South African who played such an immense role in our history, I was reminded of the strength and courage that women showed during the darkest days of the apartheid struggle. This project has allowed me to take a better look at Ruth First, the journalist, scholar and anti-apartheid activist. As I spent time getting to understand who this iconic South African was, I was moved by her fight, her willpower and the manner in which her legacy lived on through what she achieved. We are often reminded of the struggle icons through books, movies and commemorative days, but we seldom learn about those people who were not at the forefront of the struggle, but were the crucial cogs that allowed the men in the front row to continue fighting.

In my journey as a nation builder, social justice activist and human rights defender, I draw strength from the heroes who have gone before me, for they are the giants on whom I stand to continue fighting for a South Africa that is truly free, one in which dignity belongs to all, no matter where you come from. I draw strength to keep fighting for the marginalised across my country and continent, and the people of Western Sahara, who remain in the last colony in Africa, under Moroccan rule. In my lifetime they will return home and I will be there to watch their liberation and self-determination – because without their freedom, we can never truly be free. In the hardest days as an activist I will remember these words about Ruth First: “First was never a politician, yet she was a towering force in political circles – the all-important behind-the-scenes strategist, the gifted problem solver who never left a stone unturned ... A prolific and influential writer, First left an important legacy of political analysis of modern Africa, and her work in Mozambique set the international pace for integrating social science research into the creation of socialism.”

ABOUT CATHERINE CONSTANTINIDES

Constantinides established her first business, SA Fusion, a social enterprise, when she was 16. She helped introduce the Miss Earth concept to South Africa – a leadership programme aimed at inspiring young South African women to be protectors of the environment and our natural resources. She was crowned the first Miss Earth South Africa in 2003 and is the co-founder of Generation Earth, a youth-led environmental organisation. In 2013 Constantinides was the youngest of a group of 20 emerging Africans named as an Archbishop Tutu Leadership Fellow, and in 2014 was listed by Mail and Guardian as one of its Top 200 Young South Africans. A climate and environmental activist, she is passionate about human rights, being water-wise and working towards sustainable transformation.

TWITTER ICON @ChangeAgentSA





Nneile Nkholise as Esther Mahlangu (1935~)

Art is the seed from which the blossoming flowers of science and technology emerge; that is why the world is starting to propose a shift from embracing STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) to STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics). We can never fully bring science to life without placing art at the centre of scientific thinking. So, I am honoured to have been chosen to portray a living legend, the pattern genius Esther Mahlangu, a strong woman who used her passion for art, fused with her appreciation of her Ndebele culture, to tell a unique story of South Africa's beauty and our rich cultural history and heritage. She is now internationally renowned for her large-scale geometric paintings and murals that reference her Ndebele heritage. With the goal of preserving her cultural heritage, Mahlangu started an art school in the backyard of her home in the KwaMhlanga district in Mpumalanga. She funded the school herself, and when not travelling for exhibitions, she mentors young artists in the traditional style of Ndebele design.

When I was first asked to take part in this, I was also told not to worry about experiencing a world different from my everyday world of technology and engineering. Little did they know that the experience was going to bring me back home to a place where I've existed since childhood. As a child at my first art lesson, I was given a paint brush and different paints, and told to colour my imagination. It is an honour to have done this for my heroine: an icon, a legend, a powerful woman; the visionary Esther Mahlangu.

ABOUT NNEILE NKHOLISE

A mechanical engineering technologist, Nneile has been an entrepreneur since her primary school days. She first sold a pig to make money to pay her school fees and made more money either selling goods or doing people's hair. In 2015, she dreamt of starting a medical design, engineering and technology company. She entered the SAB Foundation Social Innovation Award and won. At the time, she had her engineering qualification, a big dream to develop innovations in health, and designs on paper. She gambled her pension fund money from her previous job and added it to the SAB prize money to start iMed Tech. The company employs five people and focuses primarily on medical prosthetic and bio-implant design and manufacturing.

TWITTER ICON @nneile





Andisa Ndlovu
as
Mirriam Makeba
(1932~2008)

"I see other black women imitate my style, which is no style at all, but just letting our hair be itself. They call it the Afro look". This is one of my favourite quotes by mam' Miriam Makeba. It not only speaks to how affirmed she was in her blackness and riveting natural Xhosa beauty; it also speaks to a strength not many carry. In an era that demanded women to sacrifice their femininity at the altar, as they fought against oppression, she remained poised and firm in her womanhood. I find traces of myself in the woman, artist and leader that mam' Makeba was. I draw from a trailblazing spirit. Not only is she known for coining the Afro look, she also was one of the pioneering voices who turned the tragedy of exile during apartheid into a platform to tell the South African story in its rawest form. While taking Afro-pop to the US, she found herself at the beginning of a new music genre, Afro-jazz. She didn't need to be something else to fight the war, as the war was already against who she was. In embracing herself, she inevitably became a sharp weapon against racism and patriarchy. Makeba's life of singing success combined with civil rights activism serves as a lesson to girls all over the world that femininity is a strength and that their voice counts.

ABOUT ANDISA NDLOVU

Andisa Ndlovu is a South African broadcast journalist, isiXhosa language practitioner and content creator. She has a BA degree in journalism and political studies from Rhodes University and is the founder and editor of Gold, a biannual publication for high school students in rural communities in the Eastern Cape. She started Gold with the aim of trying to fill the information vacuum in rural communities and help rural youth get to university. She is also a television news producer for the eNews channel.

TWITTER ICON @miss_andisa





Amonge Sinxoto as Charlotte Maxeke (1874~1939)

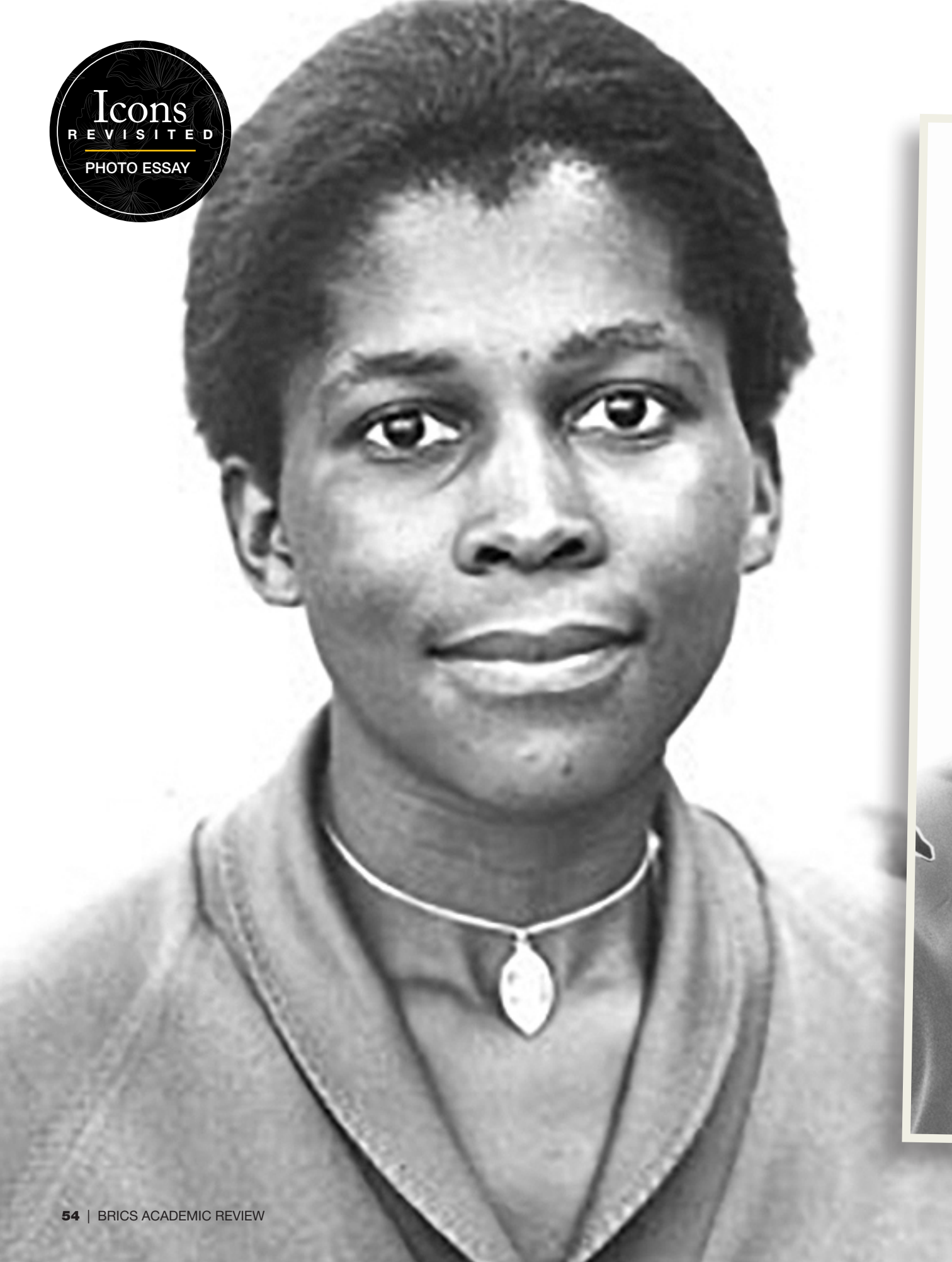
It was an honor to be part of something that educates us all about the lives and legacies of these incredible women. Mam' Charlotte Maxeke was a beacon of light to all other women of her generation. A religious leader and social worker, her light continues to radiate. Born in 1874, she received a missionary education and became a teacher. A dedicated churchgoer, she would sing in the church choir and toured England and America with the choir. After the tour came to an end in the US, she stayed on to study and obtained a BSc degree. Her steps in pursuing and fulfilling her tertiary education irrespective of the challenges stacked against her is a testament of what women are capable of through perseverance. She returned to South Africa as one of the country's first black woman graduates. She established a school and would teach and evangelise. She was also active in political affairs, opposing the pass laws, advocating for the rights of African women and fighting against the exploitation of the black community. Her willingness to work hard and stand up for what she believed in laid the foundation on which our current society is built.

I am so thankful for the motivation that being involved in this campaign has sparked, to look deeper into our history, particularly at the women who have contributed immensely to the South African, as well as the African and the global community.

ABOUT AMONGE SINXOTO

Amonge is a youth activist, advocating for national reform. She and her cousin established the social movement Blackboard Africa to change the perspectives of black youth to a more positive narrative. Through this non-profit organisation she facilitates workshops for youths to share their ideas, engage with each other on various topics and get guidance from mentors. Topics under discussion range from youth activism to women and children's rights, living in a non-racial and non-sexist society, youth trends, evolving culture, the generation gap, politics and future possibilities. Blackboard Africa also hosts events such as history talks, artists' events, book club meetings and more.

INSTAGRAM ICON: @a_monge





Busi Mkhumbuzi
as
Joyce Sikhakhane
(1943~)

I was asked to portray journalist and political activist Joyce Sikhakhane. She was born in Soweto in 1943 and grew up in Orlando West, in close proximity to the homes of Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. She recalls playing with the Mandela and Sisulu children as a child. Joyce was politically active from early on; her initiation into politics began in 1954, when the apartheid government introduced Bantu education and the African National Congress called for a boycott against it. As a result, her school was closed. She then attended boarding school in Durban and continued with student resistance. Nelson Mandela would later write to her and call her a sterling organiser.

I resonate with Joyce's resolve. I was born to parents who were student activists in the 1976 era, and I became socially active from a young age. When I was 15 I was part of a group of girls who established V-Girls South Africa, an anti-violence movement driven by girls, for girls.

Joyce's drive and talent as a writer made it possible for her to start her career at The World newspaper, and thereafter landed a job at the Rand Daily Mail, covering the political realities of the country. She was arrested and kept in solitary confinement as a political detainee in Pretoria Central Prison and in Nylstroom Prison. After her release, she was forced to flee South Africa and spent nearly 20 years in exile working for the ANC. She also wrote plays and books abroad and on her return in the early 1990s, worked for the National Intelligence Agency and then as a producer at the SABC.

We are fortunate that she is alive today to tell her own story. I am even more fortunate to be portraying her in this photo essay. She stands tall as a shining example of women's leadership in the struggle.

ABOUT BUSI MKHUMBUZI

Mkhumbuzi, now 23, was the programme director of the 16th Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture Series, which took place in July in honour of Madiba. She is currently the director of Tshimong, a for-profit organisation striving to get the voices of young people heard through debating and public speaking programmes as well as leadership development. The company aims to build a society where young people can shape the policies that affect their daily lives and effect change in their communities.

TWITTER ICON @BusiMkhumbuzi

Filler

2014 - 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

Despite being a young organisation, the NIHSS has achieved the following:



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