

## 16<sup>th</sup> BRICS Academic Forum

On 1 January 2024, Russia assumed the BRICS Chairship. This year the bloc welcomed new members namely, Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia to the BRICS bloc as per adoption through the 15<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit Declaration in August of 2023 (BRICS Summit Declaration – Johannesburg II).

As per the Russian BRICS calendar, the BRICS Expert Council under the auspices of the Higher School of Economics University, who are a member of the BRICS Think Tanks Council (BTTC) convened the 2024 BRICS Think Tanks Council meetings and 16<sup>th</sup> BRICS Academic Forum from 22-24 May 2024, in Moscow, Russia.

It is notable that prior to the 16<sup>th</sup> BRICS Academic Forum, the South African BRICS Think Tank under the auspices of the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, hosted a Pre-Academic Forum on 09 May 2024, Johannesburg, South Africa. The event was to prepare the South African delegation elected for the Academic Forum.

The BRICS Think Tanks Council and the 16<sup>th</sup> BRICS Academic Forum serves as an important gathering for thought leaders and intellectuals to deliberate on pressing issues facing the international community. The event offered a comprehensive program that encompassed a wide range of topics, including but not limited to, sustainable development, innovation, technology, trade, and security. The diversity of perspectives and the depth of analysis presented during the forum underscored the significance of multilateral cooperation in addressing global challenges. The interdisciplinary nature of the discussions allowed for a holistic understanding of complex issues, and the incorporation of diverse methodologies and theoretical frameworks enriched the intellectual discourse.

The event offered an opportunity to engage with leading experts, scholars, and policymakers from Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Iran, and Ethiopia, and provided a unique platform to exchange ideas, share insights, and contribute to the discourse on global governance, economic development, and geopolitical dynamics. Attending the 16<sup>th</sup> BRICS Academic Forum by invitation were experts from Algeria, Canada, Nigeria, and the United States of America.

Deliberations at the BRICS Think Tanks Council and the Academic Forum were not confined to theoretical debates but also extended to the formulation of policy recommendations and practical implications. The insights generated from the discussions were instrumental in identifying actionable measures that could contribute to inclusive growth, sustainable development, and enhanced cooperation among the BRICS nations. The emphasis on evidence-based policy formulation and the integration of local contexts in the proposed recommendations underscored the commitment to relevance and impact. The BTTC also convened meetings on the sidelines of the Academic Forum to complete the BRICS Academic Forum Recommendations. The same recommendations will be shared with the BRICS Leaders for their consideration at the 16<sup>th</sup> BRICS Leaders Summit, in Kazan, Russia.

Beyond the formal sessions, the event provided ample opportunities for networking and collaboration. The interactions with fellow participants, both during the scheduled breaks and

the informal gatherings, facilitated the establishment of meaningful connections and the exploration of potential areas for collaboration. The diversity of expertise and the shared commitment to advancing knowledge and understanding created a conducive environment for forging partnerships that are expected to extend beyond the duration of the forum.

In addition to the academic and policy-oriented discussions, the BRICS Think Tanks Council and the Academic Forum also offered a platform for cultural exchange and diplomatic engagement. The cultural events and social activities organised as part of the program enabled participants to gain insights into the rich heritage and traditions of the host country and fostered a spirit of mutual respect and understanding. Furthermore, the informal dialogues on diplomatic relations and geopolitical dynamics contributed to a nuanced appreciation of the complexities shaping international affairs.

As the forum ended, it became evident that the experiences gained and the connections established during the event will serve as a foundation for future prospects and continued engagement, especially for the newly joined members.

Access event pictures [here](#).

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