



**RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE 16TH BRICS
ACADEMIC FORUM 2024
TO THE LEADERS OF
BRICS COUNTRIES**

**MOSCOW, RUSSIA
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The 16th BRICS Academic Forum took place on 22-24 May 2024 in Moscow. Held under the slogan “BRICS: New Figures at the Global Chessboard”, the Academic Forum gathered academics, researchers, diplomats, and government officials. The expansion of the grouping is a new chapter in the history of multilateralism.

During more than 10 years of its existence, BRICS has evolved into a group that offers example of genuine multilateralism, new ways of collaboration, and provides a vision of a just multipolar international order. Owing to this, over 20 countries worldwide have expressed interest in joining the group. The expansion of BRICS will elevate the voices of the developing world or Global South or non-Western world in general, in global governance and other international issues of common concern and interest.

BRICS should call on all the other countries to follow a principle of peaceful coexistence and dialogue among different civilizations, histories, cultures and religions and traditions without attempts either to better each other or to elevate one set of values as being superior to others.

The 16th BRICS Academic Forum Recommendations

This year, the BRICS Think Tanks Council (BTTC) has prepared recommendations to the BRICS Leaders, encompassing such policy areas as multilateralism and global governance, international security and stability, international trade and economic cooperation, business and investment, international finance, sustainable development, just energy transition, food and energy security, environmental protection, science and education, as well as healthcare cooperation.

Multilateralism and global governance:

1. We encourage the integration of the new member states into BRICS processes and projects, while promoting the interests of all the BRICS members and strengthening the group's effectiveness. To ensure that the new member states use the potential of membership to its full extent and to utilize the contribution the new members can bring to BRICS, we call for the elaboration of a portfolio of projects that the interested new and old BRICS members could carry out, with the support of BRICS Leaders.

2. We look forward to the criteria for enlargement of BRICS and suggest that BRICS leaders find ways to strengthen the group's relations with other developing countries, including those willing to join BRICS from the developing world, while preserving its own effectiveness and cohesion. First, we recommend having a consensus decision on future expansion to provide clarity on the modalities of BRICS membership. Secondly, we suggest adopting a **Declaration on BRICS Expansion**, stating that the group is committed to cooperating with all nations that uphold the principles proclaimed in the document "BRICS Membership Expansion. Guiding Principles, Standards, Criteria and Procedures", adopted at the XV BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, and that endorse the establishment of a multipolar world. Third, we recommend wider discussions on the BRICS Partner Countries model in order to implement the consensus reached at the XV BRICS Summit in South Africa with an aim to strengthen the role of BRICS in world affairs and make the global governance system more fair and equitable. We recommend that the BRICS Partners include countries sharing BRICS values, those willing to join BRICS, yet not members, and those, cooperation with whom would be useful for strengthening the role of BRICS in world affairs and for promoting its aims, including creation of a multipolar world and a fairer global governance.

3. We support strengthening the role of BRICS as a leading grouping, which contributes to the creation of a multipolar world order, and leveraging the role of developing countries in world affairs. We suggest BRICS to discuss and come to a mutual understanding on a list of key reform

recommendations for a fairer global governance system based on internal consensus.

4. We encourage BRICS leaders to further support and promote the UN Security Council (UNSC) reform. BRICS countries have several times expressed their vigorous support of the UNSC reform focused on increasing the representation of developing countries with a view to making it more democratic, representative, effective and efficient. We support for the legitimate aspirations of developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America to play a greater role in international affairs, including in the UNSC.

5. We call on BRICS leaders to continue supporting for strengthening of developing countries' role and representation in the key global governance institutions. BRICS should support and promote cooperation on reform of the key global governance institutions (UN, WTO, WHO, World Bank, IMF, etc.) focused on the increase of representation and strengthening of the voice of developing countries in their secretariats and governing bodies. BRICS should study and suggest practical reforms to make global governance more representative, effective, transparent and accountable, including ideas on a rotation system, which implies moving key annual meetings of the UN and other key international institutions to developing countries. The 21st century also requires an international development finance system that is fit for purpose, considering the scale of developmental needs and multiple challenges facing developing countries. BRICS should work towards the G20 Leaders' call to deliver better, bigger, and more effective Multilateral Development Banks and substantially increase their financing capacity to maximise development impact.

International security and stability:

1. We encourage the BRICS Leaders to call for rejection of unilateral sanctions and weaponization of economic interdependence. The use of unilateral coercive measures not imposed by the UN Security Council and weaponization of economic interdependence for geopolitical purposes to slow down economic development, inflicting strategic damage and even

causing domestic political turmoil, is a challenge for many nations, including the BRICS states. BRICS should declare that such unilateral sanctions is a violation of international law and study ways and take steps to deter their imposition and to minimize the negative effects of these actions. This study could include the increased use of national currencies for trade, the potential for a BRICS payment system, and reviewing the BRICS reserve instrument.

2. We call for rejection of hegemony and of attempts to increase security of the one at the expense of security of the others. Pursuit of hegemony – be it global or regional, attempts to increase one’s own security at the expense of the others, and ignoring genuine security concerns of the others are among the major reasons behind the current increase of international instability and great power struggle, which, in their own turn, undermine managing and exacerbate global problems and challenges. Countries and alliances should recognize and respect the security concerns of the others. BRICS should also emphasize that the United Nations is the only international organization authorized to make legally binding decisions on international security issues and with global authority in the security realm. No regional security institution should aspire for a global role.

3. We suggest that the BRICS countries reiterate their commitment to peaceful resolution of conflicts though addressing security concerns of each other. As agreed in the BRICS Johannesburg II declaration and the G20’s New Delhi declaration of 2023, the BRICS Leaders should not just support the peaceful resolution of conflicts but also create dispute resolution frameworks, which respect the sovereignty of conflicting parties and their legitimate security concerns. Accelerating disarmament efforts should be an active part of these policies as enshrined in the Johannesburg II declaration, especially regarding biological and chemical warfare as we recommit to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. BRICS should call on all other countries to reject hybrid wars, proxy conflicts and other types of indirect warfare against geopolitical rivals, which create prerequisites for regional conflicts, undermine international security, increase risks of direct great power conflict.

4. We encourage BRICS members to declare that any wars must be avoided. BTTC should encourage research on what form these conflict prevention efforts should take. We remind all members of the principles of territoriality and right of peoples to self-determination, sovereignty and equality among states, which are central to international law. We recall Article 3 of the Moscow Declaration of 2020, and we call on all members to uphold their commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter in all their integrity, and their commitment to a world of peace, stability and prosperity, mutual respect and to upholding international law. We recall Article 20 of the 2021 New Delhi Declaration and reaffirm all members' calls for continued efforts to strengthen the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

5. We support BRICS members cooperation on challenges such as international terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, organized crime, infectious diseases, fresh water and food deficit, degradation of the natural environment and the negative consequences of climate change, disinformation campaigns, and the usage of ICTs and information as tools of interference into domestic affairs of states and ways to undermine their internal security and stability, as stated by the Foreign Ministers in 2023, constitute serious threats to the overwhelming majority of countries in the world, including BRICS states. Also, global confrontations reduce the effectiveness of global governance and impede international cooperation aimed at solving these problems. Thus, we suggest that all members facilitate cooperation on these challenges with each other and together with other like-minded countries in the global arena, to continue cooperation on these issues and to avoid politicization of such cooperation.

6. We support strengthening the Role of women in peace and security processes. Increasing the role and scope of women in peace processes (from conflict resolution to post-conflict resolution processes) remains critical to the attainment of lasting peace, security, and sustainable development. We recall article 13 of the Johannesburg II Declaration, recognizing the importance of women in peace processes. We call on all

members to support the increased participation and strengthened roles of women across all aspects of peace processes, from conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction and development, to sustaining peace.

International trade and economic cooperation, business and investment:

1. We suggest sharing experiences about development of instruments that meet socio-economic interests of BRICS members and in particular the LDC to allow the least developed country members a flexibility and longer time period for the implementation of agreements and facilitate preferential treatments that support their participation in, and benefit from, global trade investment and finance. We call for the development of the potential of the BRICS countries in food production as a factor of the improvement of the food supply and developing cooperation in this area.
2. Market transparency is a condition that allows economic agents to receive the required information for making decisions about production or consumption. The information that economic agents need to process is related to the quality of goods, their prices, and availability. The higher the quality of information available to participants is, the more transparent and effective BRICS markets will become. Increased transparency of the BRICS markets can improve the efficiency of allocating resources. It would make governments more informed and flexible in improving policies and institutions. We should consider how the BRICS CRA Research Groups' System of Exchange of Macroeconomic Information (SEMI) can be leveraged to track these measures, in addition to financial measures in accordance with the public policy of the member states.
3. All members need to further explore cooperation mechanisms on economic strategy and build up mutual trust to further advance economic cooperation among BRICS. The members should consider steps taken towards the implementation of the BRICS Economic Partnership Strategy 2025. It is also vital for BRICS countries to enhance position coordination to

jointly oppose unilateral coercive and protectionist measures, including abusing the concept of national security, and enhance the resilience and stability of global supply chains. Closer economic cooperation among the BRICS members would offer an opportunity to contribute to the restoration of global production chains, cross-border trade, and cross-border investments, which in turn are all important factors for sustainable development of the global economy. There is a need to abide by the main principles of the Strategy for the BRICS Economic Partnership to contribute to sustainable development, inclusive economic growth and trade. We stress that the goals of the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership (SEP) 2020 – 2025 adopted at the XII BRICS Summit in Russia and the BRICS Implementation Roadmap on Trade and Investment related aspects of the “Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2025” adopted at the XIII BRICS Summit in India, should be fully met to unleash BRICS countries’ potential and ensure innovative, sustainable and inclusive economic growth. BTTC should continue evaluating the implementation of the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership as with the previous Strategy 2015 – 2020, conducted by the BRICS Expert Council - Russia and the National Committee on BRICS Research. This study would contribute to a better understanding of the progress achieved by BRICS and to reveal problem areas that should be addressed by the BRICS Leaders to enhance BRICS cooperation in the current environment and ensure lessons learned within the new edition of the BRICS SEP for years 2025-2030.

4. BTTC supports continuing the elaboration of an annual Report on BRICS Cooperation Progress according to the BTTC Indicator System adopted in 2020. This report would offer an in-depth analysis of the results achieved by BRICS and its contribution to the general improvement of, socio-economic development and quality of life of its populations and to look into further developments of BRICS.

5. Encouraging trade links between BRICS countries by lowering barriers to trade, facilitation of customs procedures, encouraging paperless trade, and exchanging the best practices in trade and customs administration. Considering the fast rise of digital transactions, there is a need to

strengthen intra-BRICS cooperation in digital trade by exchanging information on best practices and arranging capacity-building trainings and visits in the field of digital trade regulation and digital public infrastructure. The expert community of the BRICS countries should contribute to consumer protection in digital trade and suggest a basis for a framework for ensuring consumer protection in the BRICS countries.

6. We believe that the BRICS should work towards strengthening the multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core. We acknowledge the growing role of the regional and mega-regional trade agreements as factors leading to the intensification of trade and economic cooperation that contribute substantially to create a solid base of economic interaction between BRICS countries and with their partners all over the world. All trade formats of cooperation should be committed to creating a rules-based, non-discriminatory, transparent, inclusive, fair, and equitable environment for trade and investment.

7. The BRICS members should foster pragmatic economic cooperation and forge a closer economic partnership with a view to expanding infrastructure investments, and partnerships including mixed-finance/public-private-partnership. The lack of quality infrastructure in some developing countries hinders their economic growth. As a significant amount of capital is required for infrastructure projects, it is advisable to expand the methods and tools of mixed financing, and to increase the attractiveness of investments in infrastructure by introducing incentives for BRICS members.

8. Taking into account the role of the BRICS economies in the restoration of international investment flows, a range of measures aimed at creating a favorable environment for investments at the domestic, intra-BRICS and international levels may promote international trade, sustainable development and inclusive growth. The BTTC should encourage research on an increased role of the New Development Bank in the promotion of the BRICS members interests in investment expansion. Improving the business environment for BRICS micro, small or medium enterprises (MSMEs) and supporting them through economic policies should also be an area of study,

including using digital tools to facilitate the integration of MSMEs into the global market.

9. We urge BRICS Leaders to consider financing for infrastructure projects in accordance with national policy objectives, including in energy; road, sea, air transportation and digital infrastructure. BRICS members should foster economic cooperation and welcome a closer economic partnership with a view of expanding infrastructure investments, enhancing standards cooperation, using public-private partnership instruments and through the NDB.

International finance:

1. BRICS states should enhance cooperation on the international monetary system. Expansion of BRICS makes a strong case to enhance cooperation on the financial relations between its member countries and to reduce financial vulnerabilities including through fast, inexpensive, transparent, safe and inclusive payment transactions. In this regard, we stress the importance of the use of local currencies in trade and investment. We welcome the sharing of experience by BRICS members on payment infrastructures, including cross-border payment systems.

2. BRICS should support the activities aimed at maintaining the stability of the New Development Bank, promoting the interests of BRICS states in investments expansion, financing SDG projects and programs in cooperation with the regional development banks, stock and commodity exchanges of BRICS states. We recommend that the New Development Bank prioritizes development of the BRICS countries and explore the usage of new financial instruments. As a part of developing cooperation between the BRICS members, we call upon further cooperation between the New Development Bank and banks for development with BRICS participation to expand financing of development projects and ensure the economic interests of the partner countries.

3. We reaffirm the importance of new instruments in local currencies for the BRICS' Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) to raise financial resources for BRICS' economic development, including swap mechanisms. The currency swap, as a monetary policy tool, can be willingly used by BRICS when providing liquidity to BRICS' central banks, in local currency, as well as a tool to maintain financial stability. Initiation of the basic principles of currency swaps, on the CRA basis, will contribute to BRICS' trade operations and risk management, as well as to sustainable and inclusive growth.

4. We recommend building connections based on relevant national and international law among BRICS central banks, promoting their participation in strengthening cross-border payment system(s) in local currencies and interbank cooperation in technologies and innovations transfer. As the BTTC, we recommend connections of the research community with BRICS central banks, in the study of ways to help improve clearing mechanisms. It will contribute to ensuring access of economic entities to BRICS markets, increase speed, stability, and security of cross-border arrangements. Participation of the academic community in the elaboration of issues related to BRICS financial infrastructure will refine the BRICS' cross-border payment system(s).

5. Promote the development of the BRICS Research Network in the field of finance and financial cooperation (FRN) within the BRICS Business Council. We support the launch of the BRICS FRN, as discussed at the first meeting of BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in Brazil in 2023, and encourage the participation of the academic community in the development of this initiative to extend joint research activities on finance and financial cooperation within BRICS and strengthen the connection between business, education and science.

6. Interaction within the framework of BRICS' information exchange channels. There may be scope for more transparency of the BRICS' economic relations. Market transparency is a condition that allows economic agents to receive the required information for making decisions about production, or consumption. This information, that economic agents

need to process, is related to the quality of goods, the price and their availability. The higher the level of information available to participants, the more transparent the markets of BRICS' members will become.

Social justice, sustainable development and quality of life:

1. BTTC recommends to BRICS countries to enhance cooperation on Sustainable Development Goals and organize it in a more comprehensive manner taking into account a long-term vision. In light of the recent Sustainable Development Goals Report by the United Nations, which indicates insufficient progress on the SDGs, BRICS countries have reaffirmed their commitment to fulfilling the Agenda for Sustainable Development by 2030 and promote each sovereign country's right to just, fair and equal development. We welcome initiatives proposed by BRICS countries with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We recommend enhancing cooperation and exchanging experience on the implementation and enhancement of the SDGs by launching a series of consultations between relevant stakeholders with the purpose of working out a joint **BRICS Roadmap** to be formulated by the BTTC **for Just and Sustainable Development** to be presented to Leaders by the BRICS Summit in 2025. The document will comprise the vision of all BRICS countries of the steps required to achieve the SDGs, joint indicators of their implementation, and a list of proposed common projects and mechanisms for mutual accountability. Moreover, the preparation of the Roadmap suggests the collection of proposals on goals and indicators that are not covered by the SDG framework so far. The Roadmap's ambition will be not only to encompass the BRICS' plans for the fulfillment of Agenda 2030, but also to lay a foundation for a common position on sustainable development beyond it. The Roadmap would require active participation from all members for all national circumstances and requirements to be taken into account.

2. We propose that the BRICS commit to expanding knowledge sharing in areas such as biodiversity, ecosystem preservation and restoration, forestry, water stress, soil degradation and desertification, marine

environment and water pollution and the plastic waste problem. With the BRICS being diverse geographically, its members comprise unique expertise in coping with environmental issues in all areas, which presents a unique opportunity for academic-level cooperation. BRICS countries' commitment to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework will also require both political and financial cooperation. We recommend that BRICS should closely coordinate their positions in the upcoming negotiations on the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund and develop a common stance corresponding to their interests as developing countries, most of which are also some of the richest in biodiversity in the world.

3. Apart from state-level initiatives, we recommend encouraging local-level cooperation on sustainable development. It is especially relevant for urban development, with BRICS countries including some of the largest cities in the world. In view of this, we propose a knowledge-sharing initiative on **BRICS Partnership of Resilient Cities for Sustainability and Environment (PRECiSE)**, a platform designed to bring together our countries' approaches to sustainable urban policy. The initiative will be based on a participatory approach that recognizes the agency of city-level, local government and municipalities in conversation with relevant national ministries. While the government-level bodies should provide organizational assistance such as venues, informational support, etc., the PRECiSE initiative is meant primarily as a forum designed to facilitate non-governmental local-level and people-to-people contacts and exchanges. This proposal should be discussed by the BRICS Environment and Climate change track. With BRICS countries including some of the largest cities in the world, it is essential to take urban development into account while implementing the SDGs. In view of this, we propose that the Leaders consider a knowledge-sharing initiative on resilient cities in partnership with the BRICS Urbanization Forum.

4. We call for enhanced national commitment to tackling city air pollution as one of the most urgent environmental problems affecting all members. To curb its adverse effects on human health and well-being as soon as possible, we recommend that Leaders consider the launch of the **BRICS**

Clean City Air Initiative with a principal goal to increase air quality of several top-polluted cities in each country by a commonly agreed mid-term target based on domestic realities. The quantitative target by each country should be defined by 2025. We also recommend that the Leaders consider collaborating and encourage technological exchanges on air quality monitoring and pollution abatement.

5. BTTC suggests that BRICS leaders should discuss a BRICS joint understanding on climate change. All members are committed to addressing climate change and contributing their fair share to global mitigation and adaptation efforts, as well as providing financial assistance to climate-vulnerable countries. To solidify this joint commitment, demonstrate leadership and clarify our shared stance in international fora, we recommend elaborating a **joint document listing several aspects of BRICS understanding of climate change**: *the necessity to align climate change mitigation with other SDGs; the technological neutrality of the energy transition; the opposition to trade barriers and other forms of trade protectionism emerging under the banner of combating climate change; and the need to establish closer dialogue between fossil fuel-exporting and -importing nations, as well as between exporters and importers of carbon-intensive products.* Apart from this, BRICS countries deem climate security, low-carbon technologies development, construction of low-carbon value chains, R&D and intellectual property as highly important related areas for cooperation. The relevance of a common understanding, which will be based on the foundation already laid in the 15th BRICS Summit Johannesburg II Declaration, stems from the increasing pressure on BRICS countries as leading emerging economies to demonstrate ambitious climate action, with the required forms and means of this action not always corresponding to the national interests and economic capabilities of the BRICS states. It is of utmost importance to highlight that in mitigating climate change, the world's nations should not leave out the challenges of inequality, poverty, hunger, or healthcare. Dialogue and mutual understanding between all groups of countries irrespective of their trade specialization are crucial for climate change mitigation to become a truly just global effort based on common but differentiated responsibilities and

respective capabilities.

6. We recommend establishing the **BRICS joint climate research center**, an expert-level permanently functioning body aimed at supporting the BRICS' climate change cooperation with reliable data and research assessments. Currently, the key sources of regular policy-relevant information on climate policies do not stem from BRICS or other countries of the developing world and thus their interests and needs, as well as the knowledge, experience and expertise of emerging economies are not always reflected. Therefore, we recommend establishing the BRICS joint climate research center in Moscow, with the participation of all members and based on annual rotating chairship and regular accountability to BTTC. The institution could be tasked with aggregating data on BRICS-related challenges, risks, policies, and other aspects connected with climate change. The center could provide analytics on policies concerning both climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as construct relevant scenarios for future development in these areas, assess the countries' vulnerability to physical and transition risks, analyze key world trends in climate policy, estimate the finance necessary to reach carbon neutrality and achieve adaptation targets, provide insights into clean technologies needed for the green transition, etc. The creation of such a research center could also be an important step in facilitating expert- and academic-level cooperation among the BRICS countries. Parallel to these intra-BRICS objectives, the research center would encourage BRICS members to strengthen engagement and participation by their scientific communities within the relevant global bodies, including the IPCC.

7. Many BRICS member states are large exporters of carbon-intensive goods on the global markets, with much of their GHG emissions embedded into products that are consumed abroad, primarily in developed countries. Considering this, *accounting consumption-based emissions would provide a new, more equitable perspective on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility and would help provide a more comprehensive vision of just energy transition.* This is also in line with the G20 High-Level Principles on Lifestyles for Sustainable Development adopted in 2023

in New Delhi. Consumption-based emissions accounting can be done regularly by the suggested joint climate research center based on a single methodology recognized by all members. Gradually, in a bottom-up manner, discussions on consumption-based emissions may penetrate wider platforms, including the UN climate negotiations process.

8. BTTC proposes to enhance cooperation of BRICS countries on coordination of carbon markets. Carbon markets are an important means to tackle climate change through channeling financial flows into efficient emissions reduction and removal projects. The general idea is to reduce emissions on territories and in businesses where it is the cheapest to do it. However, BRICS businesses are currently unable to participate in any of the members' carbon market except their country of origin due to the hurdles created by divergent regulation and market infrastructure: that is, if a company decides to conduct a mitigation project in any BRICS state other than its own, it will not be legally recognized as part of their emission reduction obligations. There is also a need for enhanced engagement around responsible carbon market principles to address concerns around the negative impacts of poorly governed carbon markets, for example, displacement of local communities, reducing access of communities to natural resources on which they are dependent and human rights abuses, amongst others. This should be done while ensuring that trade policy measures for environmental purposes, including non-tariff barriers, should not constitute a means of arbitrary discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade. For addressing these issues, we recommend fostering active cooperation on carbon markets within the relevant BRICS format and express our willingness to provide expertise to support this work.

9. All members should reaffirm their commitment to develop clean energy in order to fulfill SDG 7 and SDG 13. It should be also acknowledged that it is impossible without using all energy sources and carriers. Pursuing the principle of technological neutrality, the members should emphasize the role of nuclear energy and natural gas as low- and zero-carbon and transition energy sources, respectively, following the decisions of the

COP28. All members also have a vast space for cooperation in clean energy technologies, including energy storage, electric mobility, distributed renewable generation, hydrogen energy, electrification, carbon capture, utilization and storage, which can continue to be conducted through the Energy Research Cooperation Platform. BRICS members should emphasize the importance of just energy transition in accordance with national conditions and circumstances and respect the sovereignty of each country.

10. BRICS countries should focus their work on pushing forward innovations in the existing national energy systems and diversifying energy sources. It is of particular importance for the purposes of effectively responding to new energy security challenges, lowering the risks of energy price volatility, supporting global efforts on just energy transition and reaching the goal of carbon neutrality.

11. BTTC proposes to deepen cooperation on rural development. Agricultural sector and food supply chains are paramount for BRICS countries' sustainable development. We support the Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty proposed by Brazil and to be launched at the G20 summit in November 2024. BRICS experience and cooperation initiatives on food production, and fighting poverty can contribute decisively to the alliance effectiveness. Ongoing debates, particularly the BRICS Johannesburg II Declaration, call for promoting sustainable agriculture and food systems and implementing resilient agricultural practices. Apart from continuing cooperation within the Agricultural Information Exchange System and the Agricultural Research Platform, we suggest that agricultural sustainability should become one of the critical topics of discussion. As agreed at the 13th Meeting of the BRICS Ministers of Agriculture in 2023, the BRICS' Leaders should encourage the development of research programs agreed under the framework of the BRICS Agricultural Research Platform (BARP) to promote cooperation in the areas of agricultural research, extension, training, capacity building and technology transfer. This will further efforts to share best practices in agriculture and rural development.

12. All members should ensure that multilateral cooperation concerns

government and business levels and includes civil society while noting how such challenges as climate change and environmental problems exacerbate existing social inequalities. Facilitating inclusive people-to-people interactions, especially among the youth, will assist in generating and implementing new ideas and initiatives concerning sustainable development. We thus suggest promoting civil society dialogue and fostering networking and cooperation between the most active and engaged civil society members such as NGO Leaders, volunteers and environmentally active young people.

Science, technology, innovation, culture, sport and education:

1. Encourage innovation within BRICS through practical actions to promote sustainable economic growth today and create a solid foundation for the future. We emphasize the need for the practical implementation of the BRICS Action Plan for Innovation Cooperation for 2021-2024 and the development of the relevant Action Plan for the next period, deepening the interaction between stakeholders in the field of education, research, as well as business community and industrial sector, including cooperation under iBRICS network and the BRICS Technology Transfer Network. Encourage implementation of patent analysis and foresight methods to determine a common technological landscape and design the future of BRICS. The BTTC should consider how new members can be assimilated into these existing frameworks and represent these recommendations to the Leaders.

2. Ensure exchange of the best practices and collaboration in the field of digital economy, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, information and communication technologies (ICTs). We encourage exchange of best practices on cybersecurity, personal data regulations, digital transformation, and artificial intelligence governance. The Leaders should consider creating a **consulting group within BRICS on the exchange of best practices and tools for AI development** who can do a comparative analysis and assessment of the level of development and use of artificial intelligence.

3. As agreed by the BTTC in Cape Town in 2023, the Council should find ways to encourage dedicated research on critical and emerging technologies. Active steps should be taken to lay down the contours of the BRICS Platform on Digital Public Infrastructure.

4. Foster BRICS STI cooperation, as one of the most dynamic tracks of the grouping. We support promotion of contacts between academic and scientific centers, research and higher education institutions, and propose further development of a joint research agenda in the field of emerging and disruptive technologies. Since the core goals and spirit of BRICS is to address risks and challenges to the global economy in order to achieve global recovery and sustainable development, while also working toward greater representation of emerging markets and developing countries in the global value chain, it is appropriate that BRICS states collaborate to find a collective solution for the nations impacted by unilateral sanctions imposed by the west, particularly in STI fields.

5. Facilitate development of a system and special instruments for assessing the level of development and implementation of AI in the BRICS countries, as agreed upon between the BRICS Member States, in order to enhance expert and analytical support for the group's activities. We encourage the Leaders to work towards the modalities of the AI study group announced in 2023 to enhance BRICS knowledge sharing on best practices. We recommend that the AI study group, once it is formed, **consider conducting a pilot research project on introducing the aforementioned system.** This study would contribute to the further development of economic cooperation between the BRICS states by increasing the level of available information, which can then be used to formulate a coordinated BRICS economic strategy.

6. We stress the necessity to focus on strengthening cooperation in the field of education. It is imperative that efforts be made to develop a new generation of highly skilled professionals who can combine traditional knowledge with modern science and technology, find creative solutions for global, regional and local challenges related to social, economic and

ecological problems. We propose to strengthen the cooperation in the education area, including further development of the BRICS Network University, introducing short-term training and modular courses, enhancing academic mobility of students and elaborating intensive student and scholar mobility ecosystem in BRICS, teaching faculty and administrative staff, and mutual recognition of qualifications. The knowledge-dependent global economy is characterized by rapid changes in technology and related modes of work. Exchange of best practices for integration of TVET (technical and vocational education and training) with industry should be continued and considered as one of the priority areas of cooperation in education through the BRICS TVET Cooperation Alliance.

7. We highlight the importance of digital education cooperation within the BRICS members as was agreed by the BRICS Leaders and support the establishment of the BRICS digital education cooperative mechanisms, holding dialogues on digital education policies, sharing digital educational resources, building smart education systems, and jointly promoting digital transformation of education in BRICS members.

8. Encourage the development of national professional standards and/or qualification requirements in line with national priorities. We support joint research on the future of jobs and qualifications within BRICS and exchange of best practices and cases on the assessment of qualifications; development of databases, registers and digital systems for evaluation of skills, gaps and professional qualifications; organization of educational programs / workshops / summer and winter schools dedicated to the skills management for youth from the BRICS Member States; consider development of joint international qualifications councils.

9. Support the development of international rankings focused on BRICS countries and Global South. We highlight the importance of the development of rankings and evaluation systems, focused on the priorities, cultural and economic context of the BRICS Member States and Global South, inter alia related to the quality of education and research outputs, as discussed at the 10th Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Education in 2023.

10. Further promote scientific and educational programs and initiatives aimed at training the youth and journalists, engaging them into the BRICS political, economic, socio-humanitarian and other relevant areas of studies and interaction within the BRICS countries. These programs could include annual BRICS International School (organized by BRICS Expert Council – Russia jointly with the National Committee on BRICS Research), one semester Educational Internship Programme 2020 as well as other thematic schools, seminars and projects.

11. Extend cooperation in social sciences and humanities, that are underrepresented within BRICS cooperation as subject areas of research. Social sciences and humanities remain an important part for the development of personal and professional skills, required for a successful career and the development of a society, a country or a region in general. We support development of the skills of the future and encourage development of joint educational programmes in this area.

12. We stress the need for cooperation to produce more literature in the fields of social sciences. Based on the fact that a large part of accessible literature in the field of humanities and social sciences, including in political, economic and international fields is produced by Western universities, think tanks and thinkers, naturally the view of developing countries including BRICS members have had less opportunity to be presented to the international audience in relation to important issues such as international trends, collective security, multilateralism, the evolving world order and the desirable, fair and inclusive system, etc. Therefore, compensating this deficiency, along with the greater efforts of each developing country, including the BRICS members, will require more cooperation and coordination in the BTTC to encourage and support the production of more literature in these fields.

13. We commit to strengthening BRICS cooperation to intensify the BRICS Partnership on New Industrial Revolution (PartNIR) and create new opportunities for accelerating industrial development. We support BRICS cooperation in human resource development on new technologies through

the BRICS Centre for Industrial Competences (BCIC), BRICS PartNIR Innovation Centre (BPIC), BRICS Startup Forum and collaboration with other relevant BRICS mechanisms, to carry out training programmes to address challenges of NIR for Inclusive and sustainable industrialization. We commend the BPIC training programmes with fellowship in order to enhance capacity building on human resources.

14. Support the development and implementation of joint intellectual property policies within BRICS aimed at enhancing the value of IP and efficiency of its management by extending the IP BRICS Mechanism, considering the development of BRICS principles of intellectual property protection and management, establishing joint consulting centers in the field of intellectual property, and within BRICS, similar to a Regional IP Office. We also highlight the importance of promotion and organization of joint seminars, workshops, training and business simulation games on intellectual property management and patent analytics for youth in the BRICS Member States (inter alia through introduction of a specific educational module related to IP management to the programme of the BRICS International School).

15. Facilitate cooperation on technology entrepreneurship and commercialization of startups. Emerging technologies and innovation, inter alia generated in universities, are the major driver of economic growth, which necessitates the importance to exchange best practices in the implementation of national programmes on technological entrepreneurship, and further development of mechanisms to support cooperation of startups, universities, SMEs and industrial sector in this area. We propose to consider transformation of the BRICS Startup Forum to an annual joint platform and launching the International BRICS Accelerator Program dedicated to the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as a series of joint demo-day events for presentation of students' technological and social projects from the BRICS Member States.

16. Develop youth cooperation mechanisms to increase participation of the new BRICS members, including BRICS Young Scientist Forum and BRICS,

Young Innovators Prize and other platforms. We propose establishing the BRICS Young Scientist Alumni Programme; introducing short-term fellowships that would significantly enable connections among the young scientists and innovators with shared interests; elaborate special mentorship programs for innovators and participation in joint research projects under the BRICS STI Framework Programme.

17. Promote cooperation in culture and sports. We support the organization of joint events without discrimination against any participant based on their political views and/or country of origin. Support organization on a permanent basis and further development of the BRICS Games and International Multisport Tournament Games of the Future. We also encourage the development and organization of joint events in the field of phygital sports (a combination of traditional sports and games with virtual competitions based on digital technologies) within the BRICS.

18. Promote cooperation and coordination in the field of tourism. BRICS, with a land area of nearly 30% of the world and nearly 46% of the world's population, includes countries with amazing tourist attractions. While providing more direct people-to-people contacts and the possibility for better understanding among nations, tourism is considered one of the most important sources for developing economies. Strengthening cooperation and coordination between member countries for the promotion of tourism by facilitating tourist exchanges, especially given its contribution to the services economy, is important while strengthening cultural exchanges. s. In this regard, the following proposals can be considered by the BRICS tourism ministers': (1) proposing a **campaign for sustainable tourism** within BRICS; (2) annually selecting a city from the BRICS member countries as a **BRICS tourism city** and holding special cultural programs in it; (3) creating **BRICS tourist register of unique natural wonders and cultural heritage locations** of the grouping; (4) formation of a **BRICS working group in the World Tourism Organization** to pursue joint policies; (5) setting up the **BRICS tourism booth in world exhibitions**; (6) holding **joint professional and specialized training courses** for tourism experts; (7) investigating the possibility of visa facilitating, introducing **BRICS card**

for visa free entry, increasing direct flights, promoting the tourist attractions of the member countries in other members, etc.

19. BTTC expresses its gratitude to the Russian BRICS Chairship in 2024 and commits to take all efforts to promote and implement recommendations elaborated for the BRICS Leaders with due diligence.