

Brics Summit hailed as a huge success

The 10th Brics Summit, which took place in Johannesburg from the 25th to the 27th of July, has been hailed as a huge success by President Cyril Ramaphosa.



President Cyril Ramaphosa

“We have come to the end of the Brics Summit, which has been hugely successful. We as South Africa are very pleased with the way the Brics summit succeeded in achieving the many objectives we had in mind. It was one of the most well organised summits as articulated by the heads of state from the Brics countries,” Ramaphosa said.

The three-day summit brought together leaders who represent 40% of the world’s population and 22% of the world’s GDP.

Among the positions taken, Ramaphosa said the Brics grouping took a fairly firm stance against protectionism and “felt the need to do everything to protect the multilateral system which is now under attack”.

Commitment to the multilateral trading system was reaffirmed by the bloc which spoke against protectionism and called for openness and multilateralism.

“We confirmed our commitment to the World Trade Organisation, as the most effective mechanism available to ensure that a rules based transparent, non-discriminatory, open and inclusive multilateral trading system,” he said.

Agreements signed

President Ramaphosa said the 2018 summit was proof that Brics is not merely a talk shop but a forum that takes clear decisive decisions to better their nations as a collective.

On day-two of the summit, leaders signed the Johannesburg Declaration which among others supports an open and inclusive multilateral trading system.

In addition, two agreements were signed, one on environmental cooperation and a memorandum of understanding on a regional aviation partnership amongst the Brics countries.

The summit agreed on the establishment of a Brics Women's Forum, a vaccine centre to be based in SA and a tourism track to promote people-to-people cooperation.

Brics Outreach

As part of Brics Outreach as informed by the 2011 Sanya declaration, leaders from the five countries committed to expand their cooperation and partnerships to non-member countries. In line with this, Brics-Africa and Brics-Plus sessions were held on Friday.

Ramaphosa said South Africa, which took a stance to be truly representative of Africa in Brics, achieved this objective during the course of the 2018 summit.

"When we took up our membership in Brics, we felt that we were representing the African continent and that that we would use our participation in Brics as leverage for the African continent and advocate for the development and progress of the African continent.

"This time around we achieve that in more than one way as various countries were able to network and have bilateral meetings," he said.

African Union (AU) Chair and Rwandan President Paul Kagame, Togo President and Chair of the Economic Community of West Africa States (Ecowas) Faure Gnassingbe, Angolan President Joao Lourenco, Ugandan President and Chair of the East African Community, Yoweri Museveni and Namibia as incoming chair of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) participated in the Brics-Africa outreach session.

Meanwhile, Chair of the G20 and influential Common Market of the South (Mercosur) Mauricio Marci; Chair of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and President of Turkey Recep Erdogan and United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres took part in the Brics-Plus session on Friday. -

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