

Joint Statement of the BRICS Business Council Meeting
Held on 19 August 2013 Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa

2013-08-20

The first meeting of the BRICS Business Council, which was launched on the occasion of the Fifth BRICS Summit, took place on 19 August 2013 at the Sandton Convention Centre in South Africa. The meeting was chaired by Mr Patrice Motsepe, Chairman of the South African and BRICS Business Council. The Chairpersons of the respective chapters of the BRICS Business Council that attended the meeting are: Mr José Rubens de la Rosa (Brazil), Mr Sergey Katyrin (Russian Federation), Mr Onkar Kanwar (India) and Mr MA Zehua (China).

The founding Declaration described that the BRICS Business Council will constitute a platform that will strengthen and promote economic, trade, business and investment ties among the business communities of the five BRICS countries, as well as ensure that there is regular dialogue between the business communities of the BRICS nations and the governments of the BRICS countries.

The South African Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr Rob Davies addressed the meeting of the BRICS Business Council and indicated that the voice and opinions of the BRICS Business Council can influence the evolving agenda in respect of intra-BRICS cooperation. BRICS is serving as a counter-vailing force in the wake of the global economic crises. Cognisant of structural changes also taking place in BRICS economies as well as the world economy, he also emphasised the importance of finding a structural basis to build and strengthen trade and investment relations that support industrial development.

In order to realise the objectives as outlined in the founding Declaration concerning cooperation in business, trade, investment and manufacturing, the BRICS Business Council agreed upon the following:

- The proposed areas of cooperation, i.e. infrastructure, mining and mineral beneficiation, energy, pharmaceuticals, agro-processing, services (including financial, ICT, transportation, healthcare and tourism), value added manufacturing development, small, medium and macro-enterprise development, sustainable development, skills development and the transfer of technology.
- Recognising the emergence of new global growth points, i.e. Asia, Africa and Latin-America and identifying appropriate areas to promote cooperation
- Exchanging best practice
- Promoting Public-Private-Partnerships among BRICS business and governments
- Undertook to promote win-win partnerships between BRICS and Africa in sectors such as agro-processing, beneficiation, infrastructure (e.g. transport) and energy etc. as well as support skills development in the context of Africa.

The meeting made the following recommendations:

- To urge governments to facilitate convenience in expediting multiple-entry business visas for longer periods as well as consider a proposal to create a BRICS business travel card
- To enhance connectivity
- To create an information exchange platform (BRICS business portal) which will be facilitated by the BRICS Business Council Secretariat
- To increase cooperation on harmonisation of technical standards
- To signal the interest of the BRICS Business Council in respect of the BRICS

- Development Bank and to appeal to Governments to accelerate the formation of the Bank
- To increase value-added trade among BRICS countries

BRICS countries remain committed to Africa in the areas, among others, manufacturing, healthcare, agriculture and agro-processing.

The BRICS Business Council will continue to further deepen and strengthen its relations and work on the above proposals.

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