



# INDIA भारत

## 74<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly

### BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting

Statement by

**Dr. S. Jaishankar**  
**External Affairs Minister**

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Your Excellency Mr. Sergey Lavrov  
Excellency Mr. Ernesto Araujo  
Excellency Mr. Wang Yi  
Excellency Dr. Naledi Pandor

Dear Colleagues, it is a pleasure to be here especially as this is my first meeting of the BRICS Foreign Ministers honored to work with all of you. I would like to thank Minister Mr. Sergey Lavrov for hosting this meeting and for the excellent arrangements made.

I am informed that BRICS Foreign Ministers' meeting at Rio in July was highly successful and I intend to continue to work forward on the outcomes/consensus built over there. Strongest appreciation BRICS has been making progress over the years, and Brazil's Chairmanship this year has given it an impetus. I am sure that under Russia's Chairmanship in 2020, BRICS cooperation would realize even greater progress.

Our leaders also had a very good meeting at Osaka on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit where they agreed to further strengthen intra BRICS cooperation. I am confident that our deliberations today would continue to contribute a successful Leaders Summit later this year.

Excellencies,

We are meeting at a time when multilateralism, international trade, and rules based world order is facing challenges with question marks being raised over their continued relevance. It is clear that in this backdrop, we need to work together to strengthen multilateralism and the rule of law in international relations, and to promote a fair, just, equitable representative contemporary international order. Closely linked to the issues of challenges posed to multilateralism is necessity of reforming multilateral systems. Hence in short 'reformed multilateralism', is the way forward starting with the very venue where we are standing, the UN Security Council.

The reforms are needed not only to reflect the contemporary realities but also as the people have not realized the benefits of globalization as envisaged in an equitable manner. This has also resulted in the major economies becoming more inward looking impacting the global economic systems and specially the developing countries.

Speaking on Global Political and Security issues, I would like to start by first referring to Terrorism. Indeed terrorism has been a threat on which there has been an urgency to address it in a comprehensive manner. We need to condemn state support to terrorism. It takes the threat to a new level. The threat from terrorism is only likely to grow as the ability of groups and individuals to do harm increase as we saw in the case of the ISIS. The spread of digital technology has enabled the rapid spread of violent extremism and terrorism supporting ideologies on a much larger scale than the ability of many of the states to confront them. We believe that the Global Conference on Terrorism with

BRICS support would underline our commitment to a comprehensive approach to counter terrorism and also place these efforts on a firm international legal footing.

We also appreciate that countering terrorism is one of the priorities under Brazil's Chairship. We would like to compliment on the success of the recently held Seminar on BRICS Strategies for Countering Terrorism and welcome the establishment of the Sub-Working Groups on (i) Capacity Building; (ii) Countering Foreign Terrorist Fighters; (iii) Use of the Internet for Terror Purposes; (iv) Countering Radicalization; and (v) Addressing Terror Financing. This would lead to greater focus in these specific areas of cooperation.

Closely linked is the issue of Fugitive Economic Offenders and we, at BRICS, need to continue to work together against economic offenders and fugitives. It has emerged as a serious threat to developing economies by illegally diverting precious assets away from their developmental agenda. We look forward to your continued support in this regard.

Excellencies,

The global outlook has become more challenging today with new and complex challenges emerging. The situation in West Asia continues to be a matter of serious concern as it has the potential to severely impact our energy security as well as the welfare of millions of Indian Diaspora residing in that area. The continuing violence in Afghanistan and the situation in Korean Peninsula is also a matter of concern. India remains deeply concerned about the situation in Yemen.

Speaking on the key issues of UNGA agenda, I want to highlight that PM Modi has participated in UN 2019 Climate Summit held on 23 September and reiterated our continued commitment to fight against climate change. India has announced the start of a large-scale national campaign to address plastic pollution and has called for stop to single use plastics w.e.f. 2<sup>nd</sup> October. India had also hosted the COP14 of the UN Convention on Combating Desertification earlier this month wherein we had announced an ambitious target of achieving land degradation neutrality by 2030. India looks forward to work on various themes and with all relevant stakeholders during India's Presidency of COP from 2019-21.

Closely Linked to Climate is the issue of Sustainable Development. Realisation of these goals is on one hand closer due to technological advances, digital transformation and usage of artificial intelligence while on the other hand with the slowing down of global economy, it has become more difficult for developing countries to access the much required resources to support their developmental aspirations.

Excellencies,

BRICS has been successful over the years and has emerged as a platform for cooperation and collaboration and its success is not only a success of us five countries but of the emerging economies of the world. While we must express satisfaction on the achievements of BRICS over the last ten years, you would also agree, we need to deliberate on ways to consolidate gains and make the processes even more efficient and outcome driven.

I am happy to note that under Brazil's leadership, the focus on science and technology, innovation and digital economy had added further depth to our discussions with new initiatives like creation of BRICS network, cooperation in ICT, human milk bank and BRICS Institute of Future Networks. We support these initiatives and look forward to their successful outcomes.

India has always emphasized making BRICS a people-centric venture. During India's chairmanship in 2016 we had made good beginnings in fostering exchanges among young scientists, academics and cooperation for BRICS Film Festival, Tourism conventions, Trade fairs, Wellness Forum etc. I am happy to note that these initiatives have been successfully carried forward under subsequent chairs. I also appreciate Brazil's role in further strengthening the people to people links in BRICS.

However, if BRICS has to emerge stronger in future, we need to develop greater understanding and convergence on issues of mutual concern in the coming years. First within BRICS, we need to make BRICS mechanisms and processes more efficient and outcome driven so that Intra BRICS Cooperation becomes stronger. Second at global level, we all must work together to ensure that a rule based world order is maintained and multilateral institutions like UN, WTO, UNFCCC, IMF, World Bank, etc. remain relevant and reflect the contemporary global realities. We need to speak in common voice especially in the critical area of international governance.

Excellencies,

I sincerely hope that our deliberations today will form the basis of a stronger BRICS in the coming years. We in India have been fully supporting the Brazilian chair and would continue to do so for a successful conclusion of the BRICS Leaders Summit later this year.

I thank you for your time.

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