

SIXTH INDIA-BRAZIL-SOUTH AFRICA (IBSA) WOMEN'S FORUM MEETING HELD

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: International Treaties & Agreements, and other important organizations

The Sixth India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Women's Forum meeting was held virtually on 16th March, 2021. Led by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, the event witnessed participation of Ministers and officials responsible for Women Affairs of IBSA Countries.

The India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Trilateral Cooperation Forum is a unique platform which brings together India, Brazil and South Africa, three large democracies and major economies from three different continents. All three partners are developing pluralistic, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious nations.

IBSA is committed to inclusive sustainable development, in pursuit of the well-being for their citizens and those from the other developing nations. The principles, norms and values underpinning the IBSA Dialogue Forum are participatory democracy, respect for human rights, the Rule of Law and the strengthening of multilateralism. IBSA lays efforts in the South-South cooperation beyond the conventional areas of exchange of experts and training.

The Session commenced with the welcome and opening Remarks by Secretary, Women & Child Development, Government of India. After a brief introductory address by Ms Damares Alves, Minister for Women, Family and Human Rights of the Federative, Republic of Brazil and Ms Maite Nkoana- Mashabane Minister for Women, Youth and People with Disabilities of the Republic of South Africa, Inaugural Address was delivered by the Chair of 6th IBSA Women's Forum Smt Smriti Zubin Irani, Minister of Women and Child Development, India. In the backdrop of a global pandemic that has disrupted the lives of millions across the world in many ways, the Minister of Women & Child Development shed light on how the year 2020 has seen that the rights of women and girls gaining prominence, universality with more urgency than ever before.

During the consultation, the Forum discussed key issues that contribute towards the transformation of women's lives; by highlighting initiatives, policies and best practices for gender inclusive economy for transformation as well as for elimination of gender based discrimination and violence against women, which in the coming time will help not only in understanding each others' systems and programmes but will also carve a strategic roadmap to promote gender equality agenda for achieving sustainable development goals. The Forum emphasized on the necessity to raise voice on various multilateral fora to highlight the development priorities of the associate countries and emphasized how gender equality makes sound economic sense.

The participating countries also lauded the efforts of Government of India in helping out other countries to overcome the challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic by way of providing vaccines, masks, sanitizers, PPE Kits etc.

The Forum has resolve to carry forth its vision to ensure improving the status and condition of women by addressing structural and institutional barriers as well as strengthening gender mainstreaming.

At the end of the conference, a joint declaration was also issued highlighting the shared IBSA goals and commitments for achieving gender equality in all spheres of life.

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