

BRICS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FOR GLOBAL STABILITY, SHARED SECURITY AND INNOVATIVE GROWTH

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: BRICS, IBSA and India

On November 13-14, 2019, Brasilia will host the 11th BRICS Summit. In the run-up to this key event of the year for our group, I would like to share Russia's vision of the BRICS strategic partnership.

The current Brazilian BRICS Chairmanship managed to achieve serious progress in all main pillars of cooperation — political, economic and humanitarian. Russia supports its Brazilian friends in their efforts to improve the practical impact of our multifaceted interaction on the prosperity of our states and people.

We welcome the statement made by Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro in Osaka about the importance of strengthening the dialogue within BRICS, which will enable the BRICS countries to make the best use of ongoing global changes.

Today, alignment of efforts of our countries is particularly important. Global politics continues to reel. Various regions of the planet still retain significant conflict potential. The arms control architecture is deliberately undermined — the U.S.'s unilateral withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty was a rather dangerous step. Structural imbalances in the world economy are yet to be overcome. A serious threat to global economic growth is posed by such unfair competition practices as unilateral economic sanctions, trade wars and flagrant abuse of the U.S. dollar status as the world reserve currency. The international community is yet to find effective responses to a whole number of critical challenges of our time — from terrorism to climate change.

It got to the situation when there are attempts to replace the international legal system, established after the Second World War with the UN Charter remaining as its main source, with the so-called "rules-based order", where "rules" were being invented in secret, in "small groups", and then, depending upon a political situation, imposed on the whole world.

Multipolarity is not a recipe for competition and chaos in international relations, as some of our critics say. On the contrary, this is the only order attuned to present-day realities, which should promote the comprehensive development of all states — both big and small — and enhanced mutually beneficial cooperation among us on the basis of shared interests.

Russia, as other BRICS countries, rejects diktat and pressure, blackmail and threats, let alone the use of force without the UNSC's decision. In contrast, it proposes to follow the path of a mutually respectful dialogue aimed to reach the consensus that takes into account the interests of all actors in inter-state relations. We are convinced that any agreements on most important issues on the global agenda should be reached with the widest and equal participation of all stakeholders and be based on universally recognised legal norms. The BRICS countries are firmly committed to democratisation of international life and its development under the principles enshrined in the UN Charter, the principles of respect for cultural and civilisational diversity of the world, and the right of peoples to forge their destiny themselves.

It is of fundamental importance that our approaches to key global and regional issues are the same or rather similar. We have consistently called for a peaceful and politico-diplomatic

settlement of crises and conflicts in various regions of the world. We continue to be engaged in a comprehensive dialogue in such fields as counter-terrorism, international information security and the fight against organised crime and corruption.

We can state with confidence that having entered the second decade of its activity, BRICS, being one of the pillars of the emerging fairer polycentric world order, plays an important stabilising role in global affairs, for which it has all the necessary capacity. The group accounts for almost a third of global GDP at purchasing power parity. Last year, BRICS even outperformed the G7 on this indicator.

BRICS is becoming a magnet for many emerging economies. They are looking at us because the group protects values of multilateralism, supports transparent, non-discriminatory, open, free and inclusive international trade, and rejects unilateral economic restrictions and protectionist measures in developing international economic ties. In their statement following the meeting on the margins of the G20 Summit in Osaka last June, the BRICS leaders explicitly indicated their willingness to protect the pillars of the equitable multilateral trading system and the role of the World Trade Organization as its centre, and to advocate International Monetary Fund reform.

The New Development Bank (NDB) created by the BRICS countries — one of the promising multilateral development institutions — works successfully. Only this year, the NDB Board of Directors has approved 12 new investment projects in the BRICS countries. And since the start of its operation in 2015, 42 investment projects worth over \$11 billion have been approved.

The work to strengthen the BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) is ongoing. Its total capital of \$100 billion is to be a guarantor of the BRICS financial stability in case of crisis.

We appreciate the efforts of the Brazilian chairmanship to implement five-party initiatives in economy, science, innovations and health. We take a positive note of the systematically increased density of humanitarian exchanges — cooperation in the areas of culture, education, sport and youth policy is gaining momentum and people-to-people contacts are developing.

In 2020, Russia will take the helm of BRICS. We intend to ensure continuity and harmonious transition from the Brazil chairmanship to the Russian one. We will continue the policy of progressive and comprehensive enhancement of the strategic partnership of the BRICS countries. Certainly, we are interested in increasing financial and economic cooperation among the participating countries, effective industrial interaction and practical cooperation in developing and implementing new joint energy, telecommunications and high-tech projects. Our priorities include enhanced foreign policy coordination within leading multilateral fora, primarily in the UN, which will turn 75 next year.

I am confident that in the storming ocean of world politics, the BRICS 'ship' will steer a steady course and further contribute significantly to maintaining international stability and ensuring global economic growth. The Brasilia Summit is aimed to be another important milestone in pentilateral cooperation and on its way to new prospects.

In conclusion, I would like to wish peace, health, well-being and all the best to readers and to all nationals of the BRICS countries.

Sergey Lavrov is Russia's Foreign Minister

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