

## BRICS EDUCATION MINISTERS MEETING MEDIA STATEMENT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE 10TH MEETING OF BRICS MINISTERS OF EDUCATION HELD ON THE 13 JULY 2023 AT SKUKUZA SAFARI LODGE- MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

We began our BRICS Education meeting by held the BRICS Education Senior Officials Meeting and the 10th Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Education from 12-13 July 2023 here in Mpumalanga, Skukuza Safari Lodge.

In this august event, as the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation in South Africa, joined by the Deputy Minister of Basic Education, welcomed Ministers of Education and delegates from the Federative Republic Brazil, Russian Federation, Republic of India and People's Republic of China under the theme: "Responsive and Relevant Education and Training in the Current Global Context". Also present was the special invited guest country, Namibia.

The BRICS education engagements are hosted as part of the build-up to the 15th BRICS Heads of State Summit to be chaired by His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa in August 2023.

At the conclusion of the 10th Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Education, the Ministers deliberated and adopted a Ministerial Declaration which makes firm commitments on the eight (8) thematic areas identified as education and training priorities for the BRICS Member States.

These areas include climate change, entrepreneurship development, skills for the changing world including digital education cooperation, mutual recognition of qualifications, out-of-school youth, labour market intelligence, university global ranking and quality evaluation system, and early childhood development.

Parallel to these meetings, were the meetings of the BRICS Network University and BRICS TVET Cooperation Alliance, both of which culminated to declarations where the member states committed to working together on matters of mutual interest for the prosperity of our nations. Its objective is to deepen cooperation and exchanges to improve the responsiveness and relevance of education and training in the current global context amongst BRICS Member States.

The Ministers' Declaration is premised on a shared vision of mutual respect and understanding, equality, solidarity, openness, inclusiveness and consensus. Through the declaration, the member states committed to the following:

- Commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal: 13, to combat climate change and its impact. The meeting proposed talking bold actions to improve education, and awareness amongst respective member state general society, build human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning systems.

- to rethink and reimagine the global rankings for universities because it tends to be skewed towards valuing the priorities and context of universities of the global north, imposes indefensible costs on developing country universities and detracts from norms emphasizing cooperation, collaboration, sharing and solidarity. This commitment to develop an alternative system includes exploring the development of an evaluation system that emphasises the quality (as opposed to quantity) of research outputs of universities and their diverse contributions to inclusive development of all humanity. Such system would also seek to integrate cultural and indigenous knowledge of each country, respecting our member states' diverse cultures.
- to strengthening entrepreneurship development at all levels of education and training amongst BRICS Member States and impart the requisite skills set to students to consider self-employment as a valuable career path.
- to deliver responsive and relevant programmes for out-of-school youth and to ensure employability and absorption into labour markets. These will include the use of several interventions such as the recognition of prior learning, micro-credentialising, new courses to build capacity for skills in amongst others: artificial intelligence, machine learning, drones, banking and retail. These are meant to facilitate lifelong learning for their out-of-school youth.
- To use labour market intelligence accurately identify the skills on demand by the respective country's economies, and to inform the programmes designs thus enabling the alignment with the needs of employers as well as to equip learners with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in their chosen career paths. This approach has numerous benefits for both those affected by the just energy transition and jobs which are become extinct. This will increase employment opportunities, economic mobility, and reduced risk of poverty and social exclusion.
- to improve the quality and enhance international cooperation on higher education and training through mutual recognition qualifications in line with the Global Education 2030 Agenda.
- To facilitate exchanges of ideas and experiences within BRICS member states on interventions for equipping learners with skills fit for the future through multiple learning pathways education to prepare them for the changing world of work and equitable social justice.
- to improve the quality of teaching and learning at early childhood development level of the education system and integrate these within curricula that inspires the interests and imagination of young people in high-end disciplines such as maths and astronomy. To also facilitate the expanding and universal access to the ECD thus ensuring to ensure holistic early childhood development to provide a better start in life for all children within BRICS countries.

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