



New Delhi Statement on Environment 7th Meeting of BRICS Environment Ministers

New Delhi, India August 27, 2021

Preamble

1. We, the Environment Ministers of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa participated in the 7th BRICS Environment Ministers Meeting on 27 August, 2021 virtually under the BRICS Chairship of India, to exchange views on the global environmental and climate challenges and how the BRICS Nations can address these challenges in the light of Covid-19 pandemic in the spirit of Cooperation for *Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus*, but taking into account national circumstances and priorities.
2. We emphasised that building an inclusive and environmentally sustainable future requires collective global action for poverty eradication, promoting sustainable lifestyles and sustainable patterns of consumption and production, and a development philosophy based on protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development and effectively addressing climate change.

Global environmental and climate challenges

3. We reaffirmed our commitment to the Principles of Rio Declaration on Environment and Development including Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC). We acknowledged the importance of achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Goals and reiterate our commitment to the achievement of all SDGs, especially SDG 12, 13, 14 and 15, as vital elements of climate action and biodiversity conservation. We agree to cooperate closely in the run up to the 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP26) in the United Kingdom and the 15th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP15) in China. We took note of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group 1 contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report and noted that it is a clarion call for rapid, sustained and effective science-based responses to climate change.

4. We emphasized the need to ensure a holistic approach to climate change, focussed on all dimensions including mitigation, adaptation, financing and technology transfer and capacity building and to promote harmonious coexistence between human and nature. We encourage further discussions and events amongst BRICS countries in this regard. We also acknowledged that the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires transformative leadership that aims to "leave no one behind".
5. We acknowledged the importance of global action against climate change by recognizing the fundamental equality of all people in accessing economic growth and sustainable development. We recognized that the UNFCCC is the centre of the collective, multilateral response to the climate challenge and called for the balanced and comprehensive implementation of the Convention and its Paris Agreement, in accordance with its goals and principles, as well as the progressive and nationally determined nature of contributions to the Paris Agreement. We underscored the need to honour the commitments made by developed countries in the pre-2020 period even as we have moved into the post-2020 era, including the yearly US\$ 100 billion goal for climate finance. We noted with grave concern the proposals for introducing trade barriers, such as unilateral carbon border adjustment, that are discriminatory.
6. With respect to biodiversity, we remain committed to contributing to the development of an ambitious, balanced and realistic Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and to the success of the CBD COP 15, to be held in Kunming, China. We expect that the three objectives of the CBD be considered in the new framework in a balanced way. We call upon developed countries to fulfill their obligations under the CBD, especially under articles 16, 18 and 20.

Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy

7. We acknowledged the role of resource efficiency and circular economy towards promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns and achievement of all SDGs, especially SDG 12. We reaffirmed our commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its goals and committed to enhance actions for sustainable use of natural resources for building equitable and inclusive economies.
8. We recognized that efficient management of wastes including recovery of energy and secondary raw materials is crucial for resource conservation, healthy ecosystem and quality of life of our people. We agreed to enhance our mutual cooperation for efficient waste management. We recalled the promotion of cooperation within BRICS in the areas of waste management and pollution prevention, in particular the theme of the 4th BRICS Environment Ministers meeting of "Strengthening cooperation amongst BRICS on Circular Economy in the context of the Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)".
9. We welcomed India's initiative of BRICS Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy Dialogue (BRICS RE & CE Dialogue) and appreciated its potential role in facilitating exchange of knowledge and best practices on waste management, resource efficiency and circular economy. We reaffirmed our support to strengthen the BRICS RE & CE Dialogue by sharing policy initiatives, experiences, best practices and promoting

dialogues in areas of mutual interest including construction, agriculture, solar, biofuels, packaging, electronic wastes, food, water and textiles. We encourage sharing of knowledge and best practices on resource efficiency and circular economy amongst BRICS countries.

Air Pollution and Marine Plastic Litter

10. We recognized the importance of abatement and control of air and water pollution. We agreed to share with each other our technical expertise on water pollution as well as conservation and management of water resources and rivers through joint projects, such as the BRICS Clean Rivers Programme as well as the proposal for the establishment of a network of our regulatory and technical institutions. We reiterated our intention to promote cooperation within BRICS in the areas of pollution prevention, in particular air pollution, which would help in achieving Agenda 2030 and its goals in line with the Third Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 3) theme of "Towards a pollution free Planet". We welcomed sharing of experiences of best practices and collaboration in areas of uniformity in methodology for air quality data generation, its quality control and assurance, cleaner technologies at process as well as in pollution control, abatement, and prevention, strengthening national air quality monitoring network and promotion of quality assurance and quality control activities.
11. We recognized the need for addressing marine plastic litter, which is recognised as a global challenge. We will endeavour to take steps for reducing land-based sources of plastic waste entering the marine ecosystems through surface bodies such as rivers. In this regard, the Clean Rivers Programme of BRICS for combating marine plastic litter is relevant.
12. We also recalled the resolution on "Addressing single-use plastic products pollution" adopted by the fourth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) in 2019, piloted by India, which encourages voluntary action on single use plastic product pollution, including promoting the development of environmentally friendly alternatives to single use plastic.

Conservation and sustainable use of Biodiversity

13. We acknowledged the rich biodiversity of BRICS countries and its significance for sustainable livelihood and development. We noted the considerable experience of our technical institutions and agreed to promote closer cooperation among the expert bodies for sustainable management of biodiversity and achieving Sustainable Development Goals. We appreciated that the conservation and sustainable use of the rich biodiversity of BRICS countries is of special significance for the global environment and to achieve the internationally agreed targets and goals, including SDGs. We resolved to enhance cooperation in the field of biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits. We agree to cooperate closely to support the CBD COP 15 in China and make contribution to the adoption of the Post-2020 Global

Biodiversity Framework and also promote cooperation in biodiversity-related international conventions and fora including on endangered species.

14. We noted that the world is dealing with unprecedented threats to wildlife and underscored the need for taking global collective action guided by national circumstances, policies and priorities to abate these threats. We encouraged collaborative efforts against prevention of wildlife crime, including illicit trafficking in protected species of wild fauna and flora. We further encouraged compliance to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) requirements to combat illegal trade in wildlife; and address trans-boundary issues of trafficked products at ports of entry and other barriers that impede combating the illegal wildlife trade.
15. We took note of the 13th Conference of the Parties (COP13) to Convention on Conservation of the Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) held in February 2020 in Gandhinagar, India under the theme – “Migratory Species connect the planet and together we welcome them home”. We also recalled the ‘Gandhinagar declaration’ which emphasized the concept of ‘Ecological Connectivity’ as one of the top priorities for CMS in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, especially for the conservation and sustainable management of migratory species and their habitats. We underlined the need for taking effective measures to bring in more awareness on the need for controlling destruction and fragmentation of ecosystems, unsustainable and high-risk consumption and illegal wildlife trade. We encouraged strengthening synergies, cooperation amongst various biodiversity related Conventions both at the national and international levels including the exchange of best practices in the field of biodiversity conservation, managing high mountain ecosystems and conservation of migratory species. We also encouraged involvement of local communities and other stakeholders in the conservation of biodiversity.

Forest Cover Assessment and Management of Forest Fire

16. We recognised the importance of forests in providing ecosystem services, preserving biodiversity, sequestering carbon and strengthening ecological health towards achieving sustainable future for all. We further acknowledged the role of remote sensing technology in forest resource assessments and monitoring. In this context, we encouraged collaboration and cooperation, especially in the use of Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Data Analytics and other front-end geospatial technologies, and welcome initiatives which will help in furthering collaboration for developing technologies for Forest Assessment and long-term ecological monitoring.
17. We noted that over the recent decades forest fires have become one of the major drivers of damage to forests causing not only loss of biodiversity and wildlife habitat, but also adversely impacting the livelihoods of people dependent on forests. We agreed to explore the use of advanced technologies in the areas of forest fire monitoring, burnt area assessment, fire danger rating system, early-warning systems and assessment of ecological losses that can help in combatting forest fire, and

welcomed collaboration in policies and practices for effective management of forest fires, sharing of experiences and exchange of best practices.

18. We welcomed initiatives to strengthen collaboration on gaining additional technical aspects on usage of advanced technologies, carbon modelling, impact of climate change on various forest types, as well as engage in knowledge building activities to enhance capacities and help in development of improved practices and entrepreneurship in forestry.

Conclusion

19. We acknowledged the progress made in the BRICS Environmentally Sound Technology (BEST) Cooperation Platform and under the BRICS Environment Memorandum of Understanding. We reaffirmed our commitment to the Partnership for Urban Environmental Sustainability Initiative (PUESI), Clean Rivers Programme, sustainable urban management, tackling marine plastic litter, air pollution, cleaning of rivers and resource efficiency and agreed that the PUESI could also provide a supportive platform for associated exchange and cooperation, engaging partners. We also recognized the importance of concrete actions on cooperation, including the proposals to develop the BRICS Clean Rivers Programme and PUESI.
20. We advanced our dialogue on key themes that could be integrated into our cooperation initiatives, with emphasis on global environmental and climate challenges as well as waste management, air pollution, circular economy in the context of sustainable consumption and production, combating marine plastic litter and single use plastic product pollution, forestry, and conservation of biodiversity.
21. We acknowledged the individual efforts undertaken by each BRICS country in addressing the pressing global environmental and climate challenges and the innovative solutions presented for achieving an inclusive and environmentally sustainable future. We appreciated the Republic of India for organising the 7th BRICS Environment Ministers' Meeting and extended full support to the People's Republic of China for its BRICS Chairship in 2022 and convening the 8th BRICS Environment Ministers' Meeting.
22. To strengthen the spirit of Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus among the BRICS Nations and to take forward the discussions on the key areas adopted by the BRICS Environment Ministers, in between the Meetings, we may organise technical meetings for each key area adopted in this Joint Statement.
