



On July 7, 2017, President Xi Jinping presides over the BRICS Leaders' Informal Meeting in Hamburg, giving introductory remarks and a summary speech. President Jacob Zuma of South Africa, President Michel Temer of Brazil, President Vladimir Putin of Russia, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India are also present.

BRICS: Jointly Building a Better Future

By WU SIKE

IN June, foreign ministers from the five BRICS countries convened in Beijing for their annual meeting. A decade ago, Brazil, Russia, India, and China pioneered a new model of cooperation between emerging market countries in response to multi-polarization and globalization. This year, the beginning of the second decade of the association, China assumed the BRICS presidency. The emphasis at the latest BRICS meeting was, therefore, how China could work with other BRICS countries to deepen partnerships and build a better future.

A Fruitful Decade

Over the past 10 years, cooperation between BRICS countries has increased steadily under the guidance of their leaders. Focal areas include political security, economy and finance, and people-to-people and cultural exchanges; substantial progress has been made in these areas. Thanks to the efforts of all parties, BRICS cooperation has grown from a seed into a towering tree, taking on a conspicuous role in international affairs.

According to data from the International Monetary

Fund, the combined share of BRICS countries in the world economy has risen from 12 percent to 23 percent, and their contribution to global economic growth now exceeds 50 percent. As the world economy has yet to fully recover, the five countries also face development challenges. They nevertheless have retained good growth momentum in comparison with other countries.

So far, an all-round, wide-ranging and multi-level dialogue and cooperation mechanism has been established between the five countries, including the BRICS Leaders' Meeting, regular meetings of foreign ministers, the meetings of BRICS High Representatives for Security Issues, the BRICS Business Council, the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Working Group, the BRICS Expert Working Group on Cyber-Security and exchanges and cooperation between their respective policies. What's more, BRICS countries have put in motion a mechanism for meetings of their envoys with multilateral organizations in New York, Geneva and Vienna, which allows them to align their stances and speak in one voice on major international and regional issues.

Last April, China's Ambassador to the UN, Liu Jieyi, delivered a speech at the High-level SDG Financ-

ing Lab on behalf of BRICS, articulating the group's support for sustainable development. This is just another example of how BRICS plays its due role in international affairs. Meanwhile, a multitude of people-to-people and cultural exchanges are conducted between the five countries, strengthening the bond between their peoples and consolidating the public foundation for further cooperation.

Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa are going through similar development stages, facing similar historical missions, and have the same development goals. It is natural for them to pull together, and this grouping can boost world peace and stability, help build democratic international relations, promote a multi-polar world, and better protect the legitimate rights and interests of developing countries.

These remarkable achievements over the past decade have illustrated the strong endogenous drive and huge potential of BRICS cooperation, which is expected to continue to strengthen and cover a full spectrum of issues.

Innovative Cooperation

Chinese President Xi Jinping hailed the BRICS cooperation as an innovation, saying that it transcends the old pattern of political and military alliances, and pursues partnerships rather than alliances. It breaks free from the obsolete thinking of ideological segregation, and blazes a trail for mutual respect and common progress. It also surpasses the old mindset of the zero-sum game, and practices a new concept of mutual benefit and win-win cooperation. "The BRICS cooperation mechanism has been in existence for 10 years and BRICS members have focused on development, which not only benefits the people of the five countries but also offers a recipe for the world to address food and security problems. BRICS countries are a community of shared interests and future," Xi concluded.

The foreign ministers of BRICS countries had constructive discussions on the group's development over the next decade and more during the June meeting. They agreed that the five countries should take on the role of stabilizer for regional and international crises. BRICS members hold similar or identical opinions on a number of regional and international issues, and have been a vital force in defending world peace and justice. They have stressed their support for the UN's pivotal role in managing international affairs, and for seeking political solutions for hot-spot issues. They will continue to defend the authority of international laws in handling international affairs, and join hands to cope with the challenges facing all of humanity, including terrorism and climate change.

The foreign ministers agreed that BRICS cooperation should accelerate the transformation of inter-

national order, contribute to the construction of a multi-polar world, promote democratic international relations, as well as create a fair and just international order and system. BRICS is committed to establishing a community of shared future for humankind by contributing creative thoughts and plans towards the common prosperity of human society.

Under the global circumstances defined by, more than anything else, changes and snafus, the priority of all BRICS members is to maintain domestic stability and development, and thereby foster a wholesome international environment, and nudge the international order towards greater justice and fairness. BRICS is a fledgling but promising mechanism, and BRICS cooperation reflects the shared wish of emerging economies as well as the new demands of international relations. It stands in sharp contrast to the Cold War mentality.

The BRICS countries have similar experiences in history, the same development status, and shared goals for the future. Following the spirit of openness, inclusiveness, and win-win results, their cooperation has shown great vitality, pressing ahead steadfastly.

Working for New International Relations

The year 2017 is another milestone in the development of BRICS. In its capacity as the rotating president,

China will, together with the other four countries, usher BRICS cooperation into its second decade. To pursue greater success for this period, the group will, among other measures, strengthen the three cooperative pillars – political security, economy and finance, and people-to-people and cultural exchanges – open up more areas of cooperation, expand the "BRICS Plus" dialogue, and build extensive partnerships.

Politically, China stands by the principle of "dialogue rather than confrontation, and partnership rather than alliance," espousing the policy of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit, and inclusiveness in developing relations with neighboring countries. It will work with other Asian countries to forge a community of a shared future, and conduct cooperation in various areas and at various levels to promote a confluence of interests. Upholding friendship and justice and pursuing the greater good, China will emphasize unity and cooperation with other developing countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, building a cooperative framework with all developing countries and regions and thereby elevating the cooperation between developing countries to a new level.

Economically, China will advance inclusive development. It already contributed to the world economy through its stabled, sustained growth in the "new normal" stage. It helped set and implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through its across-the-board participation in the negotiations and cooperation on a range of global issues under the UN framework.

GLOBALIZATION

The BRICS nations have always held fast to globalization, as they have benefited from this trend of development.



A scene from the *Time for BRICS* performance in Tianjin on July 6, 2017.

China promotes interconnectivity under the Belt and Road Initiative, which has already yielded several major cooperative projects of mutual benefit.

It is also vigorously pushing ahead with international cooperation on productivity, having already extended it to four continents – Asia, Africa, Europe, and America – to share its development fruits with more countries and regions. China helped improve global economic governance by co-founding the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the Silk Road Fund, and the New Development Bank.

China is calling for a new type of international relations based on win-win cooperation by seeking common ground while shelving differences, and expanding consensus and dissipating divergence. To achieve this goal China proposes more communication and coordination on major international issues and an increased supply of public products for world peace, stability, and prosperity. By establishing partnerships with countries across the world, China, in the spirit of win-win results, has stepped up practical cooperation in various areas and increased in-depth exchanges with different countries, peoples and cultures, which boost mutual understanding and lead to the construction of a community of shared future for humankind.

All BRICS countries are aware that their cooperation, like a boat sailing against the current, must keep forging ahead, or it will slip backwards. On the shoulder of the achievements of its first decade, the group is

expected to roll out more substantive measures to form a new type of international relations over the next 10 years.

During the ninth BRICS Summit, to be held in Xiamen in September, a meeting is scheduled between emerging market nations and developing countries. The mission of BRICS is to promote solidarity and cooperation between these countries, and make incessant efforts to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The facts have proved and will continue to prove that BRICS works for the interests of all emerging markets and developing countries instead of just those of the five countries themselves.

The group will promote the spirit of openness, inclusiveness, and win-win cooperation, advocating a cooperative model that accommodates different social systems and cultures, and aims to achieve mutual benefits and win-win results for different development patterns.

The new international situation demands close coordination and cooperation between BRICS countries in dealing with global challenges.

We believe that, through their joint efforts, the cooperation between BRICS countries will better serve the well-being of their peoples, boost their international standing and influence, and create a brighter future for humankind. ■

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SIMILAR

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