



Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's remarks during a BRICS Ministerial Council meeting

Colleagues, friends,

I would like to open this meeting with observing a moment of silence in memory of the untimely demise of President of Iran Ebrahim Raisi and our colleague Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, and to once again offer our deepest condolences to the people of Iran and the families of the deceased. Everyone please stand up.

Colleagues,

We are pleased to welcome you to Nizhny Novgorod, one of Russia's oldest cities, which is over 800 years old. No doubt, today's meeting will leave a mark of its own not only in the history of major international events held in this city, but in the history of BRICS as well. This is the first time a meeting of the BRICS Ministerial Council is being held in a new expanded format.

The expansion of the BRICS is a compelling proof of the ongoing formation of a multipolar international order. New globally significant political decision-making centres are emerging among the countries of the Global South and Global East, the Global Majority countries. These countries advocate a more equitable order based on sovereign equality of states and civilisational diversity.

The transition to a new international order (we had the chance to see it) will take an entire historical era and be a thorny path. The United States and its allies keep trying to retain their elusive dominance and to slow down the objective processes leading to multipolarity. They are weaponising economic tools and using sanctions pressure and financial blackmail to force sovereign states into choosing specific development models and trade partners. The West is not above using military force. Everyone knows about Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, Syria, Ukraine, and a number of other countries. And this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Recent international developments have revealed the true colours of those who have so far claimed an almost exclusive right to define "universal values" acting under the guise of the "rules-based order." The proponents of this concept are trying to impose rules and interaction mechanisms that benefit only them, to replace equal candid dialogue with small coalitions that act in a non-transparent manner and monopolise the right to speak and act on behalf of the entire world.

Just like the Global Majority countries, Russia advocates a fairer international order based on the sovereign equality of states that relies on the balance of power and interests. As a team, we aim to promote a future-oriented, constructive international agenda. Strengthening the role of the country-to-country formats that advocate collective approaches to international development becomes particularly important in this context.

BRICS is one such association where the principles of equal cooperation - mutual respect, openness, pragmatism, solidarity, continuity and, of course, consensus - have been implemented in real life, not in words. I'm convinced that BRICS is driven by the wind of change, since its role in addressing global challenges will increase which can be seen from the steady growth in the number of countries that are genuinely interested in joining our association. In this context, we expect to see productive discussions during a separate session today with the participation of a number of like-minded BRICS countries.

Colleagues,

Russia's chairmanship is gaining momentum. About 70 events have been held, and more are to come. Notably, all BRICS partners took a constructive part in them. Work is underway on key Russian initiatives in the transport sphere, the creation of the Contact Group on Climate and Sustainable Development, the Working Group on Nuclear Medicine, and the Medical Association.

Major efforts are underway to implement the decisions of the Johannesburg Summit of 2023, in particular, in terms of improving the international monetary system and developing a platform for making payments in national currencies in bilateral trade. In accordance with the instruction issued by the leaders at the Johannesburg Summit, we are focusing particularly on harmonising modalities for establishing a category of BRICS partner states.

Our agenda is extensive and includes items that will have a direct impact on the future international order and the creation of its fair foundations.

Source: [Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)