



Independent Civil Society Statement on the BRICS Summit:  
**Advancing Prosperity, Peace, and Human Rights**

June 19, 2024

This statement results from discussions at the first Civil Society Forum on the BRICS Summit, held virtually on June 19, 2024, before the BRICS Civil Forum in Moscow on July 3-4, 2024.

We present this statement to the leaders of the 2024 Russia BRICS Summit (Kazan, October 22-24, 2024) and to the participants of the BRICS Civil Forum in Moscow on July 3-4, 2024. Our collective voices echo the aspirations and concerns of millions worldwide who seek a more equitable, peaceful, and just global order.

We, the participants of the Civil Society Forum on the 2024 Russia BRICS Summit, recognize the historic responsibilities of the Global North and the role of BRICS in promoting South-South cooperation, economic resilience, and stability through diverse economic partnerships, and attempting to create a just economic and financial order by reforming the international financial, trade and economic architecture including supporting alternative global trade currencies. Firmly believing that the BRICS nations can leverage their collective influence to drive transformative changes, ensuring a sustainable, equitable, and resilient future for all, we highlight several concerns that BRICS leaders should urgently address to achieve human rights and prosperity for all resolving internal and external peace issues for human prosperity:

**1. Global Partnership for Sustainable Development**

We are deeply concerned about the worsening division among nations driven by narrowly defined geopolitical and geoeconomic interests and perceived threats and the undermining of various international agreements, and ongoing negotiations. Such acts threaten national and global security, as well as global food, health, energy and cyber security. We call on BRICS leaders to actively collaborate with all governments and not block progressive language and international agreements aimed at social, economic justice, and environmental and climate sustainability. This includes addressing profound inequalities both within and among countries

and targeting the prevention of global threats to peace, such as increased militarisation, climate change, pandemics, AI, and autonomous weaponry through inclusive global mechanisms and processes for sustainable development. BRICS shall support the global governance reform agenda by utilizing the momentum given by the upcoming UN Summit of the Future, promoting global partnership that cultivates intergenerational equity supported by equitable and transparently negotiated financing for sustainable development. The BRICS countries could proactively support the Financing for Development process, the efforts for a UN tax convention and for progressive, innovative forms of finance.

## **2. Universality of Human Rights and SDGs**

There can be no “national sovereignty” in understanding human rights. Human rights are universal. They have been recognized and ratified by all BRICS members by virtue of each country’s UN membership and should be integrated into all policy statements, summit outcome documents, and development agendas, including the New Development Bank (NDB) strategies. Implementing all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) should remain a priority for BRICS by aligning national policies and investments. The 2030 Agenda and its SDGs were negotiated and adopted by all UN member states, including the BRICS; they are not pro-western but a universal agenda. In its implementation, and based on the tenet of leaving no one behind, it is crucial to enable decision-making for the people of vulnerable and marginalized sectors, as well as independent and autonomous civil society organizations (CSOs) that can provide critical opinions and solutions to the BRICS agenda, including the promotion of new advance strategies that aligns the moto of BRICS.

## **3. Peace, Security, and Conflict Resolution**

We are painfully alarmed by the ongoing genocide in Gaza and the invasion of Ukraine, as well as the numerous other ongoing conflicts. We urge making all efforts to stop the war in Ukraine and address all conflicts through dialogue and negotiations following international law and the UN Charter, and proactively engage to stop the ongoing genocide in Gaza. According to UN Security Council’s Resolution 1325 engage women in all ceasefire and peace negotiations. BRICS countries should use the power of veto at the UN Security Council responsibly, not as a political instrument but as a force to save human lives, which is our greatest common value. Moreover, BRICS countries should champion UN Security Council reform to reaffirm their commitment to an equitable world. BRICS countries should refrain from and prevent armed conflicts, engage proactively for common security and disarmament, and avoid building military blocs against perceived enemies. There should be no nuclear threats but instead cooperation for a world without nuclear weapons by signing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and engaging proactively in the 2026 Review of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). We trust the BRICS countries will all join the universal moratorium or reduction of military spending to enhance human security and development.

#### **4. Climate Action and Biodiversity Protection**

Overcoming the three planetary crises - climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution - should be at the core of BRICS countries' agendas as all are under threat from its effects, and vulnerable communities such as indigenous peoples, and women and children and people with disabilities in each country are especially at risk. BRICS countries must address climate change as a top global priority by enhancing their respective Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the UNFCCC. This involves not only setting ambitious targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions through the transition to renewable energy but also implementing concrete policies and actions to achieve these targets. False solutions such as nuclear power should be avoided. True renewable energy sources reduce emissions, create jobs, enhance energy security, and promote economic resilience and energy independence. Climate, gender, and social justice should be integrated into national development agendas to protect those most affected by climate and environmental impacts. BRICS countries must ensure that climate policies are inclusive, equitable, just and human rights-driven in achieving adaptation, resource efficiency, sustainable consumption, driving innovation, and resilience-building in vulnerable communities. Furthermore, encourage the trade of recyclable materials and products designed for a circular economy. This can be achieved by reducing trade barriers, standardizing regulations, and providing incentives for businesses and communities engaged in the circular economy. BRICS could champion the notion of just transitions towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies.

#### **5. Gender Equality**

Gender equality is recognized globally as a fundamental human right and a foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world. However, in some BRICS countries, various forms of discrimination against women and girls persist. Discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals is also prevalent and violates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. BRICS countries should eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women, girls, and LGBTI persons in both public and private spheres. Addressing these issues, rooted in historical and structural inequalities, should be a priority in public discourse in BRICS countries to promote equality and human rights for all. BRICS countries need to ratify ILO Convention 190, which prohibits workplace violence and harassment, and join the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. They should ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership in political, economic, and public life. Additionally, BRICS should implement policies to value unpaid care and domestic work through public services, infrastructure, and social protection, promoting shared responsibility within households and families. The concluding observations of the CEDAW negotiations for each country must be fully and immediately implemented. We would welcome BRICS's progressive contributions to

the Commission on the Status of Women 2025, which will reaffirm the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

## **6. Civil Liberties and Civic Space**

Many of our colleagues from Russia and other BRICS countries have had to leave their countries due to shrinking civic space and human rights violations, some of which are lethal. We insist on protecting the civil liberties ratified or at least signed by all BRICS member states in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, urge all countries to ratify all 9 fundamental human rights conventions as well as the 10 core ILO labor standards, by guaranteeing freedoms of expression, assembly, and association, allowing CSOs and human rights defenders to operate without fear of persecution or harassment. In certain BRICS countries, the number of political prisoners continues to rise, many of whom are women. We urge governments to eliminate the practice of political persecution for peaceful activities and immediate release of Trade Union activists, environmental, women and human rights defenders as well as political prisoners. BRICS countries also should stop transnational repression of exiled activists and reprisals for cooperation with the UN human rights system. The Foreign Agent Law should be abolished in those countries where it is in force, and the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the UN Human Rights Council and of the thematic Human Rights Commissions should be fully implemented. BRICS countries should not block the participation of independent civil society in the work of the United Nations but instead promote an open and inclusive dialogue at all international fora.

We believe the BRICS summit is a critical platform for shaping the future of our global community and has the potential to play a pivotal role in creating a sustainable, equitable, and resilient global future. As civil society, we urge the leaders of BRICS to harness this opportunity to champion policies that advance social, economic, gender, and climate justice, uphold human rights, and foster global peace. By doing so, BRICS can lead the way in creating a more equitable, just, and peaceful world for all.

With respect and determination,

Signatories

[List of organizations and individuals supporting the statement - UPDATING]

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