VII BRICS Summit

Ufa Declaration

(Ufa, the Russian Federation, 9 July 2015)

1. We, the leaders 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, met on 9 July 2015, in Ufa, Russia, at the Seventh BRICS Summit, which was held under the theme "BRICS Partnership – a Powerful Factor of Global Development". We discussed issues of common interest in respect of the international agenda as well as key priorities in respect of further strengthening and broadening our intra-BRICS cooperation. We emphasized the importance to strengthen BRICS solidarity and cooperation, and decided to further enhance our strategic partnership on the basis of principles of openness, solidarity, equality and mutual understanding, inclusiveness and mutually beneficial cooperation. We agreed to step up coordinated efforts in responding to emerging challenges, ensuring peace and security, promoting development in a sustainable way, addressing poverty eradication, inequality and unemployment for the benefit of our peoples and the international community. We confirmed our intention to further enhance the collective role of our countries in international affairs.

2. We welcome the substantive progress that was made since the Fortaleza Summit on 15 July 2014 during the Brazilian BRICS Chairship, especially the establishment of BRICS financial institutions: the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserves Arrangement (CRA). The Ufa Summit marks their entry into force. We also broadened our cooperation in the political, economic and social fields and reaffirmed our focus on strengthening our partnership.

3. With the aim of consolidating our engagement with other countries, particularly developing countries and emerging market economies, as well as with international and regional institutions, we will hold a meeting with the Heads of States and Governments of the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union and the

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), as well as the Heads of observer States of the SCO. Participants in this meeting share various issues of mutual interest. This lays a solid foundation for launching a broader mutually beneficial dialogue. All of us remain committed to upholding the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and international law and we strive to achieve sustainable economic growth through international cooperation and an enhanced use of regional integration mechanisms in order to improve the welfare and prosperity of our people.

4. At our meeting we emphasized that the year 2015 marks the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of the United Nations. We reaffirmed our strong commitment to the United Nations as a universal multilateral organization entrusted with the mandate of helping the international community maintain international peace and security, advance global development and promote and protect human rights. The UN enjoys universal membership and has a central role in global affairs and multilateralism. We affirmed the need for comprehensive, transparent and efficient multilateral approaches to addressing global challenges, and in this regard underscored the central role of the United Nations in the ongoing efforts to find common solutions to such challenges. We expressed our intention to contribute to safeguarding a fair and equitable international order based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and to fully avail ourselves of the potential of the Organization as a forum for an open and honest debate as well as coordination of global politics in order to prevent war and conflicts and promote progress and development of humankind. We recall the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document and reaffirm the need for a comprehensive reform of the United Nations, including its Security Council with a view to making it more representative and efficient so that it could better respond to global challenges. China and Russia reiterate the importance they attach to the status and role of

Brazil, India and South Africa in international affairs and support their aspiration to play a greater role in the UN.

5. The year 2015 also marks the 70th Anniversary of the end of World War II. We paid tribute to all those who fought against fascism and militarism and for freedom of nations. We are encouraged that the General Assembly adopted by consensus the resolution 69/267 entitled “Seventieth Anniversary of the End of the Second World War”. We welcomed that in conformity with this resolution on 5 May 2015 the General Assembly held a special solemn meeting in commemoration of all victims of the war. We express our commitment to resolutely reject the continued attempts to misrepresent the results of World War II. While remembering the scourge of war, we highlight that it is our common duty to build a future of peace and development.

6. We assert that peaceful coexistence of nations is impossible without universal, scrupulous and consistent application of the generally recognized principles and rules of international law. The violation of its core principles results in creation of situations threatening international peace and security.

We insist that international law provides tools for achieving international justice, based on principles of good faith and sovereign equality. We emphasize the need for universal adherence to principles and rules of international law in their interrelation and integrity, discarding the resort to "double standards" and avoiding placing interests of some countries above others.

We reaffirm our commitment to rigorous compliance with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations of 1970.

We will further enhance cooperation to defend common interests in respecting and upholding international law based on the UN Charter.

7. We note the global character of current security challenges and threats and express our support for international efforts to address these challenges in a way that provides equal and indivisible security for all states, through respect for international law and principles of the UN Charter.

We will continue our joint efforts in coordinating positions on shared interests on global peace and security issues for the common well-being of humanity. We stress our commitment to the sustainable and peaceful settlement of disputes, according to principles and purposes of the UN Charter.

8. We condemn unilateral military interventions and economic sanctions in violation of international law and universally recognized norms of international relations. Bearing this in mind, we emphasize the unique importance of the indivisible nature of security, and that no State should strengthen its security at the expense of the security of others.

9. We recall that development and security are closely interlinked, mutually reinforcing and key to attaining sustainable peace. We reiterate our view that the establishment of sustainable peace requires a comprehensive, concerted and determined approach, based on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equity and cooperation.

10. We reaffirm the intention to strengthen the principle of equitable and mutually respectful cooperation of sovereign states as the cornerstone of international activities to promote and protect human rights. We will continue to treat all human rights – civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, as well as the right to development – on the same footing and to give them equal attention.

We will take every effort to bolster constructive and non-politicized human rights dialogue at all relevant international fora, including the United Nations.

Within the UN human rights institutions, including the Human Rights Council and the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly we will strengthen coordination of our positions on the issues of mutual interest. We support the universal periodic review carried out by the UN Human Rights Council and will constructively contribute to its work.

11. The global recovery continues, although growth remains fragile, with considerable divergences across countries and regions. In this context, emerging markets and developing countries (EMDCs) continue to be major drivers of global growth. Structural reforms, domestic adjustment and promotion of innovation are important for sustainable growth and provide a strong and sustainable contribution to the world economy. We note the signs of improving growth prospects in some of the key advanced economies. However, risks to the global economy persist. The challenges are related to high public debt and unemployment, poverty and inequality, lower investment and trade, negative real interest rates along with signs of prolonged low inflation in advanced economies. We remain concerned about potential spillover effects from the unconventional monetary policies of the advanced economies, which could cause disruptive volatility of exchange rates, asset prices and capital flows. We call on major economies to strengthen their policy dialogue and coordination in the context of the G20 to reduce the potential risks. It is important to strengthen the framework of international financial cooperation, including through instruments such as swap-lines, to mitigate the negative impacts of monetary policy divergence in reserve currency issuing countries.

12. We express support for the development of action-oriented economic cooperation and systematic strengthening of economic partnership for the recovery

of the global economy, resisting protectionism, promoting high and productive employment, reducing possible international financial market risks and strengthening sustainable growth.

We are convinced that further efforts to coordinate macroeconomic policies between all leading economies remain a major prerequisite for early and sustainable recovery of the global economy. We also strive to facilitate market inter-linkages, robust growth and an inclusive and open world economy characterized by efficient resource distribution, free movement of capital, labour and goods, and fair and efficiently regulated competition.

13. Sound macroeconomic policies, efficiently regulated financial markets and robust levels of reserves have allowed the BRICS economies to better deal with the risks and spillover effects presented by the challenging global economic conditions in the last few years. In this context the BRICS economies are taking the necessary steps to secure economic growth, maintain financial stability and speed up structural reforms. We will also continue to work to intensify our financial and economic cooperation, including within the New Development Bank and the BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement to build upon our synergies.

We welcome and support the creation of a platform of joint discussion for trade cooperation amongst BRICS countries through enhanced dialogue between the BRICS Export Credit Agencies (ECAs), namely ABGF, ECGC, ECIC SA, EXIAR and SINOSURE. In specific, the BRICS countries have agreed to the establishment of an annual BRICS ECA meeting with the purpose of exploring opportunities for cooperation and future joint action to promote exports among BRICS and to other countries. The inaugural meeting for this new format took place on the sidelines of the Ufa Summit.

14. We reaffirm the important role played by the BRICS Interbank Cooperation Mechanism in expanding the BRICS countries financial and

investment cooperation. We appreciate the efforts made by the member banks to explore the BRICS innovation potential. We welcome the signing of the "MoU on Cooperation with the New Development Bank" between our respective national development banks/institutions.

15. We welcome the entry into force of the Agreement on New Development Bank signed during the VI BRICS Summit in Fortaleza. We also welcome the inaugural meeting of the Board of Governors of the NDB held on the eve of the Ufa Summit and chaired by Russia, as well as the work done by the Interim Board of Directors and the Pre Management Group aimed at the earliest launch of the Bank. We reiterate that the NDB shall serve as a powerful instrument for financing infrastructure investment and sustainable development projects in the BRICS and other developing countries and emerging market economies and for enhancing economic cooperation between our countries. We expect the NDB to approve its inaugural investment projects in the beginning of 2016. We welcome the proposal for the NDB to cooperate closely with existing and new financing mechanisms including the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

16. We welcome the conclusion of the ratification process of the Treaty Establishing a Contingent Reserve Arrangement of the BRICS and its entry into force. We also welcome the signing of the BRICS Inter-Central Bank Agreement that sets technical parameters of operations within the BRICS CRA. We see the creation of the BRICS CRA, allowing its members to provide mutual financial support, as an important step in the financial cooperation of our countries. Furthermore, this new mechanism is a valuable contribution to the global financial safety net.

17. The Strategy for the BRICS Economic Partnership that we adopted today would be the key guideline for expanding trade and investment, manufacturing and minerals processing, energy, agricultural cooperation, science, technology and

innovation, financial cooperation, connectivity and ICT cooperation between our countries. We direct the relevant Ministries and concerned agencies of our States to take practical steps for efficient implementation of this Strategy. We emphasize the important role of the New Development Bank, the BRICS Interbank Cooperation Mechanism, the BRICS Business Council, the BRICS Business Forum, and the BRICS Think Tanks Council in the implementation of this Strategy. We also direct our Ministers/Sherpas to look into the feasibility of developing a BRICS trade, economic and investment cooperation roadmap for the period until 2020.

18. We will continue our consultations and coordination on the G20 agenda, especially on issues of mutual interest to the BRICS countries. We will also continue working to bring greater attention to the issues on the G20 agenda that are prioritized by developing countries and emerging markets, such as macroeconomic policy coordination under the G20 Framework for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced growth, containing spillover effects, supporting economic activity, as well as bridging the gaps caused by cross-border impacts of the global financial regulation reform, adaptation to new rules introduced by the Action Plan on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) and the Common Reporting Standard for Automatic Exchange of Tax Information (AEOI). We will continue to appeal for broader and deepened G20 consultations with low-income countries on G20 policy recommendations that will have an impact on them.

The leaders of Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa welcome and support China's upcoming Presidency of the G20. BRICS will work closely with all members to lift global growth, strengthen International Financial Architecture and consolidate the role of the G20 as the premier forum for international financial and economic cooperation.

19. We remain deeply disappointed with the prolonged failure by the United States to ratify the IMF 2010 reform package, which continues to undermine the

credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness of the IMF. This prevents the increase in the institution's quota resources and the revision of quotas and voting power in favour of developing countries and emerging markets as agreed by an overwhelming majority of members, including the United States in 2010. We expect the United States to ratify the 2010 reforms by mid-September 2015 as agreed in the IMF. In the meantime, we are prepared to work on interim steps provided they deliver equivalent results to the levels agreed as a part of the 14th General Quota Review. We reaffirm our commitment to maintaining a strong, well-resourced and quota-based IMF and, in this regard, urge other Members to continue the reform process through the 15th General Quota Review without delay.

20. We share concerns regarding the challenges of sovereign debt restructurings. Debt restructurings have often been too slow and too late, thus failing to reestablish debt sustainability and market access in a durable way. The handling of sovereign debt restructurings should be improved to the benefit of creditors and debtors alike. We welcome the current discussions in the United Nations to improve sovereign debt restructuring processes, as well as the current work to strengthen the contractual approach in order to ensure more timely and orderly restructuring. We emphasize the importance of addressing these challenges and call all G20 countries as well as IFIs to actively participate in these processes.

21. We join in the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and reaffirm our support for working together to strengthen an open, transparent, non-discriminatory, and rules-based multilateral trading system as embodied in the WTO. We welcome Kenya's hosting of the 10th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC10) in Nairobi on 15-18 December 2015.

We stress the centrality of the WTO as the institution that sets multilateral trade rules. We note the importance of bilateral, regional and plurilateral trade agreements and encourage the parties to negotiations thereon to comply with the

principles of transparency, inclusiveness and compatibility with WTO rules to ensure that they contribute to strengthening the multilateral trading system.

22. We reaffirm the role of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) as a UN body with a mandate to consider interconnected issues of trade, investment, finance and technologies as related to development. We call on UNCTAD to fulfill its development mandate through more active implementation of technical cooperation programmes and facilitation of policy dialogue, as well as research and capacity-building. We look forward to a successful outcome of UNCTAD XIV.

23. We applaud the progress in the implementation of BRICS Trade and Investment Cooperation Framework. We welcome the Framework for BRICS E-commerce Cooperation as an instrument to promote current and future initiatives with an aim to build a closer economic partnership in this sphere. We instruct our Ministers to continue to explore ways and means in strengthening our cooperation on E-commerce.

We welcome the Initiative on Strengthening IPR Cooperation among the BRICS Countries. We support the efforts aimed at establishing and enhancing the cooperation mechanisms in such areas as SMEs support, trade promotion, sharing experiences on single window projects, inter alia, and direct officials to identify concrete activities in these areas.

24. We acknowledge the potential for expanding the use of our national currencies in transactions between the BRICS countries. We ask the relevant authorities of the BRICS countries to continue discussion on the feasibility of a wider use of national currencies in mutual trade.

25. We will continue our joint efforts aimed at improving competition policy and enforcement.

As important emerging markets and developing countries, BRICS are faced with many similar problems and challenges in terms of economic development and fair competition. It is of significance to strengthen the coordination and cooperation among the BRICS competition agencies.

Considering this, we attach great importance towards developing a mechanism preferably through a joint MoU among the BRICS countries to study the issues of competition with a special focus on socially important economic sectors. The proposed mechanism may facilitate cooperation in competition law and enforcement.

We welcome our relevant agencies' efforts to create conditions for fair competition in pharmaceutical sector.

26. The BRICS countries reaffirm their commitment to participate in the development of international standards of international taxation and cooperation for countering the erosion of tax base and profit shifting, as well as to strengthen mechanisms for ensuring tax transparency and to exchange information for taxation purposes.

We remain deeply concerned about the negative impact of tax evasion, harmful practices, and aggressive tax planning which cause erosion of tax base. Profits should be taxed where the economic activities driving the profits are performed and value is created. We reaffirm our commitment to continue to cooperate in relevant international fora on issues related to the G20/OECD BEPS Action Plan and AEOI. We are engaged in assisting developing countries to strengthen their tax administration capacity, and to promote a deeper engagement of developing countries in the BEPS project and the exchange of tax information. The BRICS countries will share knowledge and best practices in taxation.

27. We reiterate our strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stress that there can be no justification, whatsoever, for any acts of terrorism, whether based upon ideological, religious, political, racial, ethnic, or any other justification.

We are determined to consistently strengthen our cooperation in preventing and countering international terrorism. We stress that the UN has a central role in coordinating international action against terrorism, which must be conducted in accordance with international law, including the UN Charter, international refugee and humanitarian law, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We believe that terrorist threats can be effectively addressed through a comprehensive implementation by states and the international community of all their commitments and obligations arising from all relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council and the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We call upon all states and the international community to adhere to their commitments and obligations and in this regard to resist political approaches and selective application.

The BRICS countries reaffirm their commitment to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) International Standards on Combating Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism & Proliferation.

We seek to intensify our cooperation in FATF and FATF-style regional bodies (FSRBs).

We recognize that active international collaboration to counter the spread of violent extremism and its ideologies is a necessary prerequisite in the fight against terrorism. At the same time, we underscore that international cooperation on those tracks should rest upon international law taking into consideration that it is the

sovereign governments that bear the primary responsibility for preventing and countering violent extremism-related threats.

28. We express deep concern about the world drug problem, which continues to threaten public health, public and human safety and well-being and undermines social, economic and political stability and sustainable development. We plan to address the problem through an integrated and balanced approach to drug supply and demand reduction strategies, in line with the UN conventions of 1961, 1971 and 1988 and other relevant norms and principles of international law. Taking into account the unprecedented global growth in the production and demand of narcotic drugs, we call for more active measures to address the drug problem and to discuss it at the relevant international fora. We reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem adopted in 2009 at the 64th session of the UN General Assembly, as well as the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 High-Level Review by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. These provide a solid basis for an open and inclusive UN General Assembly Special Session on the world drug problem to be held in 2016. We will explore convergences in the preparatory process for UNGASS 2016.

We commend the cooperation among our respective drug control authorities, and welcome decisions adopted at the meeting of the BRICS Heads of anti-drug agencies held in Moscow on 22 April 2015, including those aimed at creating mechanisms of interaction in countering the world drug problem; we also take note of the results of the Second Ministerial Anti-drug Conference held in Moscow on 23 April 2015.

29. We are convinced that corruption is a global challenge which undermines the legal systems of states, negatively affects their sustainable

development and may facilitate other forms of crime. We are confident that international cooperation plays a pivotal role in countering and preventing corruption. We reaffirm our commitment to make every effort to that end, including mutual legal assistance, in accordance with the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and multilaterally established principles and norms. In this regard, we look forward to the success of the sixth session of the Conference of State parties to the UNCAC, which will take place in St. Petersburg on 2-6 November 2015.

In that context, we decided to create a BRICS Working Group on Anti-Corruption Cooperation.

30. We intend to intensify efforts undertaken by our States to prevent and combat transnational organized crime.

We will work for the inclusion of crime prevention and criminal justice issues among the long-term priorities of the UN agenda. We support efforts of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime of 2000 to enhance the effectiveness of its application, including through advancing the negotiating process to establish a mechanism to review the implementation of the Convention provisions and its additional protocols.

We stand for the adoption of an integrated and comprehensive approach to the problem of transnational organized crime, taking due cognizance of the outcomes of the 13th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice held in Doha in April 2015.

We aim to deepen interaction among the BRICS countries on issues related to the prevention and combat of transnational organized crime.

31. Piracy and armed robbery at sea represent a significant threat to the security of international navigation and to the security and development of affected

regions. While reiterating that Coastal States have the primary responsibility for counteracting these types of criminal offences, we intend to reinforce our cooperation towards this goal and we call upon all parties concerned to remain engaged in the fight against these phenomena. We also stress the need for a comprehensive response to piracy, in order to tackle its underlying causes. We stress the need for an objective assessment of risks in piracy-prone areas with a view to mitigating negative effects on the economy and security of coastal states.

We commend the efforts made by many nations to safeguard the sea lines of communication, and stress the importance of continued joint efforts by the international community to fight piracy and armed robbery at sea. We believe that legal prosecution of pirates should complement the endeavours by the international community to ensure safe navigation. Accountability is a key element to increase the effectiveness of the anti-piracy coalition, as well as the promotion of long-term development policies on land. We underline that a long-lasting solution to the issue of piracy in affected areas requires improving sustainable development, security and stability, and strengthening local institutions and governance.

32. Reaffirming that the exploration and use of outer space shall be for peaceful purposes, we stress that negotiations for the conclusion of an international agreement or agreements to prevent an arms race in outer space are a priority task of the Conference on Disarmament, and support the efforts to start substantive work, inter alia, based on the updated draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects submitted by China and the Russian Federation.

We recognize our countries can benefit from opportunities for outer space cooperation in order to promote the application of relevant technologies for peaceful purposes. We will intensify our cooperation in the areas of joint

application of space technologies, satellite navigation, including GLONASS and Beidou, and space sciences.

We reiterate that outer space shall be free for peaceful exploration and use by all States on a basis of equality in accordance with international law, and the exploration and use of outer space shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development. We stress that all States should contribute to promoting international cooperation on peaceful exploration and use of outer space while taking into particular account the needs of developing countries. We oppose unilateral measures which may hinder the international cooperation as well as national space activities of the developing countries.

We are firmly convinced that the international community should consistently undertake efforts to raise the basic levels of safety of space activities and operation and prevent conflict. In this connection, our countries can cooperate in working out common approaches in that area. Priority should be accorded to issues related to the safety of space operations, in the broader context of ensuring the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, as well as ways and means of preserving outer space for peaceful purposes, which are on the agenda of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS).

33. ICTs are emerging as an important medium to bridge the gap between developed and developing countries, as well as to foster professional and creative talents of people. We recognize the importance of ICTs as a tool for transition from information to a knowledge society and the fact that it is inseparably connected with human development. We support the inclusion of ICT-related issues in the post-2015 development agenda and greater access to ICTs to empower women as well as vulnerable groups to meet the objectives of the agenda.

We also recognize the potential of developing countries in the ICT ecosystem and acknowledge that they have an important role to play in addressing the ICT-related issues in the post-2015 development agenda.

We recognize the urgent need to further strengthen cooperation in the areas of ICTs, including Internet, which is in the interests of our countries. In that context, we decided to constitute a BRICS working group on ICT cooperation. We reiterate the inadmissibility of using ICTs and the Internet to violate human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to privacy, and reaffirm that the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online. A system ensuring confidentiality and protection of users' personal data should be considered.

We consider that the Internet is a global resource and that states should participate on an equal footing in its evolution and functioning, taking into account the need to involve relevant stakeholders in their respective roles and responsibilities. We are in favour of an open, non-fragmented and secure Internet. We uphold the roles and responsibilities of national governments in regard to regulation and security of the network.

We acknowledge the need to promote, among others, the principles of multilateralism, democracy, transparency and mutual trust, and stand for the development of universally agreed rules of conduct with regard to the network. It is necessary to ensure that UN plays a facilitating role in setting up international public policies pertaining to the Internet.

We support the evolution of the Internet governance ecosystem, which should be based on an open and democratic process, free from the influence of any unilateral considerations.

34. Information and communications technologies provide citizens with new tools for the effective functioning of economy, society and state. ICTs enhance opportunities for the establishment of global partnerships for sustainable development, the strengthening of international peace and security and for the promotion and protection of human rights. In addition, we express our concern over the use of ICTs for purposes of transnational organized crime, of developing offensive tools, and conducting acts of terrorism. We agree that the use and development of ICTs through international cooperation and universally accepted norms and principles of international law is of paramount importance in order to ensure a peaceful, secure and open digital and Internet space. We reiterate our condemnation of mass electronic surveillance and data collection of individuals all over the world, as well as violation of the sovereignty of States and of human rights, in particular, the right to privacy. We recognize that states are not at the same level of development and capacity with regard to ICTs. We commit ourselves to focus on expanding universal access to all forms of digital communication and to improve awareness of people in this regard. We also stress the need to promote cooperation among our countries to combat the use of ICTs for criminal and terrorist purposes. We recognize the need for a universal regulatory binding instrument on combating the criminal use of ICTs under the UN auspices. Furthermore, we are concerned with the potential misuse of ICTs for purposes, which threaten international peace and security. We emphasize the central importance of the principles of international law enshrined in the UN Charter, particularly the political independence, territorial integrity and sovereign equality of states, non-interference in internal affairs of other states and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We reaffirm the general approach set forth in the e'Thekwini and Fortaleza Declarations on the importance of security in the use of ICTs and the key role of the UN in addressing these issues. We encourage the international community to

focus its efforts on confidence-building measures, capacity-building, the non-use of force, and the prevention of conflicts in the use of ICTs. We will seek to develop practical cooperation with each other in order to address common security challenges in the use of ICTs. We will continue to consider the adoption of the rules, norms and principles of responsible behavior of States in this sphere.

In that context, the Working Group of Experts of the BRICS States on security in the use of ICTs will initiate cooperation in the following areas: sharing of information and best practices relating to security in the use of ICTs; effective coordination against cyber-crime; the establishment of nodal points in member-states; intra-BRICS cooperation using the existing Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRT); joint research and development projects; capacity building; and the development of international norms, principles and standards.

35. Noting that the international community increasingly faces grave natural and human-made disasters, we strongly believe that there is a need to promote cooperation in preventing and developing responses to emergency situations.

In that context, we welcome initiatives by India and other BRICS countries concerning cooperation in the above mentioned field, as well as Russia's initiative to convene a meeting of the BRICS Heads of National Agencies Responsible for Disaster Management in St. Petersburg in 2016.

We also acknowledge the fruitful discussions regarding natural disasters taking place within the context of the BRICS cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation, which already resulted in a BRICS Workshop in this field, organized by Brazil in May 2014.

36. Respecting the independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, we express deep concern about the ongoing violence in Syria, the deteriorating humanitarian situation and the growing threat of

international terrorism and extremism in the region. There is no alternative to the peaceful settlement of the Syrian conflict, we support the efforts aimed at promoting a political and diplomatic settlement of the crisis in Syria through a wide dialogue between the Syrian parties that reflects the aspirations of all sectors of Syrian society and guarantees the rights of all Syrians regardless of their ethnicity or confession on the basis of the Geneva Final Communiqué of 30 June 2012 without preconditions and external interference.

Condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, we call for consolidation of Syrian society in the face of this dangerous threat, strict implementation by the international community of all provisions of the UN Security Council resolutions 2170, 2178 and 2199, particularly dealing with suppression of financing and other forms of supporting terrorists, as well as for compliance with universally recognized norms of international law related to countering terrorism and extremism, including the principles of respect for the sovereignty of the states.

We reiterate our condemnation of any use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in Syria. We commend the outcome of setting international control over the Syrian arsenals of chemical weapons and transferring toxic substances and their precursors from Syrian territory in accordance with the UNSC resolution 2118 and the obligations of Syria under the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. We emphasize that the success of these efforts was the result of a unity of purpose among the members of the Executive Council of the OPCW and the UNSC and constructive cooperation of the Syrian authorities with the special mission of the OPCW/UN.

We express our deep concern about the deterioration of the humanitarian aspects of the Syrian crisis and strongly condemn human rights violations by all parties to the conflict. We reaffirm the need to ensure safe and unhindered access

of humanitarian agencies to affected population in accordance with UNSC resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165(2014), 2191(2014) and the UN guiding principles of emergency humanitarian assistance. We welcome practical steps taken by the Syrian parties to fulfill the requirements of these resolutions. We reject the politicization of humanitarian assistance in Syria and note the continuing negative impact of unilateral sanctions on the socio-economic situation in Syria.

We express support for the steps of the Russian Federation aimed at promoting a political settlement in Syria, in particular the organization of two rounds of consultations between the Syrian parties in Moscow in January and April 2015, as well as the efforts by the UN Secretary General, his Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura, and other international and regional efforts aimed at peaceful resolution of the Syrian conflict.

37. We condemn in the strongest terms terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, the continued, widespread and grave abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law committed by the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, Al-Nusrah Front and associated terrorist groups, and in particular the persecution of individuals and communities on the basis of their religion or ethnicity, as well all forms of violence against civilians, particularly women and children.

38. We express concerns about spillover effects of the instability in Iraq and Syria resulting in growing terrorist activities in the region, and urge all parties to address the terrorist threat in a consistent manner. We strongly condemn the inhumane acts of violence perpetrated by terrorist and extremist groups, such as the self-styled ISIL, in the territory of the Republic of Iraq, especially those actions consisting of the killing and forced displacement of innocent civilians; and/or related to targeting victims on religious, cultural or ethnic grounds; and/or resulting

in the destruction of Iraqi cultural and historical heritage, such as monuments, mosques, churches, museums, palaces and shrines.

We reaffirm our commitment to the territorial integrity, independence and national sovereignty of the Republic of Iraq and reject all forms of foreign interference that may hamper the consolidation of its national democratic institutions and the harmonious coexistence of the rich social fabric of the Iraqi people. We stress our support to the government of Iraq in its efforts to achieve national reconciliation and underscore the key role of the reconciliation process for the achievement of a lasting peace, security and stability in the Republic of Iraq.

We urge the international community to assist Iraq in its efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons and refugees in the affected areas of that country.

We remain strongly committed to support the Republic of Iraq in achieving stability, peace, democracy, national reconciliation and unity, which is in the interest of regional and global peace and security.

39. Reaffirming our commitment to contribute to a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of a universally recognized international legal framework, including the relevant UN resolutions, the Madrid Principles and the Arab Peace Initiative, we strongly believe that the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can contribute both to a positive outcome of other crises in the region and to the promotion of sustainable peace in the Middle East.

Therefore, we call upon Israel and Palestine to resume negotiations leading to a two-state solution with a contiguous and viable Palestinian State existing side by side in peace with Israel within mutually agreed and internationally recognized borders based on 1967 lines with East Jerusalem as its capital. In this regard, we

note the respective efforts of the Middle East Quartet. We oppose the continuous Israeli settlement activities in the Occupied Territories, which violate international law and seriously undermine peace efforts and threaten the concept of the two-state solution. We welcome all initiatives aimed at achieving intra-Palestinian unity and urge the parties to this process to facilitate to full extent the implementation of the international obligations assumed by Palestine. We call on the UN Security Council to fully exercise its functions under the UN Charter with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

We encourage the states that participated in the 2014 International Donors Conference on Reconstruction of Gaza Strip in Cairo to fulfill their pledges and call on Israeli and Palestinian authorities to create the necessary conditions for channeling international aid to the people of Palestine. We welcome the efforts of the UN Relief and Works Agency in providing assistance and protection for Palestine refugees and encourage the international community to further support the Agency. In this context, we welcome the recent accession of Brazil to UNRWA's Advisory Commission.

40. We support the efforts aimed at ensuring the early establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction on the basis of agreements freely arrived at among the states of the region. We reiterate the call for convening of a conference on the issue to be attended by all states of the region. We urge the Middle East countries to show political will and pragmatic approach and adopt a constructive position for achieving the noble goal of creating a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

41. We look forward to an early conclusion of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPA) to be agreed upon between China, Germany, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, the United States and Iran with the participation

of EU. This plan of action is supposed to restore full confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme and provide for the comprehensive lifting of sanctions imposed on Iran. The JCPA should enable Iran to fully exercise its right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including the right to uranium enrichment, under the NPT, and consistent with its international obligations, under strict international safeguards. It should also provide for the normalization of trade and investment with Iran. We believe that the implementation of JCPA would strongly contribute to the strengthening of international and regional security.

42. We welcome the completion of the election process in Afghanistan in 2014 and the establishment of the National Unity Government led by President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer Dr. Abdullah Abdullah. We welcome the international community's confirmation of its obligations to Afghanistan that was reflected in the decisions of the London conference held in December 2014.

We believe that a broad and inclusive national reconciliation in Afghanistan which is Afghan-led and Afghan-owned is the surest path to the lasting peace, stability rehabilitation and reconstruction in Afghanistan. We call on all parties concerned to participate in the reconciliation, and call on the armed opposition to disarm, accept the Constitution of Afghanistan and cut ties with Al-Qaeda, ISIS and other terrorist organizations.

We remain concerned about the security in Afghanistan. We reiterate that terrorism and extremism pose a serious threat to the security and stability of Afghanistan, the region and beyond. The appearance and rapid growth of influence of the ISIL, as well as visible deterioration of the security situation along the border of Afghanistan are of serious anxiety. We support the efforts made in fighting against terrorism and extremism in Afghanistan.

For that purpose we confirm our readiness and call upon the international community to remain engaged in Afghanistan and fulfill its long-term

commitments on civilian and security assistance, including strengthening its security forces' capability.

Taking into account unprecedented growth in production of narcotic drugs in Afghanistan for the second consecutive year, we call for more active measures to address the drug problem and to discuss it at all relevant international fora. We stand for further strengthening of the Paris Pact as an important interstate framework for fight against the proliferation of opiates originating from Afghanistan.

The UN has a core role to play in the coordination of the international community efforts to settle the situation in Afghanistan.

43. We reiterate our deep concern about the situation in Ukraine. We emphasize that there is no military solution to the conflict and that the only way to reconciliation is through inclusive political dialogue. In this regard we call on all parties to comply with all the provisions of the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements, adopted in February 2015 in Minsk by the Contact Group on Ukraine, supported by the leaders of Russia, Germany, France and Ukraine and endorsed by the UN Security Council in its resolution 2202.

44. We express serious concern about the escalation of the armed conflict in Libya, highlighting its extremely negative consequences for the Middle East, North Africa and the Sahel region. We note that the military intervention in this country in 2011 led to the breakdown of integrated state institutions, effective army and law-enforcement bodies, which in turn contributed to the rise of activities of terrorist and extremist groups. We underline the urgency to safeguard the sovereignty of the country and its territorial integrity, and we reaffirm the need to overcome the dissensions between Libyan political forces and to achieve an agreement on the formation of a National Unity Government as soon as possible.

In this context, we express our support for the efforts to foster the inter-Libyan dialogue by the UN Secretary-General and his Special Representative for Libya Bernardino Leon, by the neighboring countries and by the African Union.

45. We express our concern about the dire security and humanitarian crisis in South Sudan. We condemn all ceasefire violations and acts of violence against civilians and humanitarian agencies. We call upon all parties to demonstrate the political will and commitment to end the tragedy in South Sudan and to provide conditions for the safe delivery of humanitarian aid to the population. We express our belief that a long-lasting solution to the crisis is only possible through an inclusive political dialogue aimed at national reconciliation. We support efforts being made by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and other regional and international actors to mediate a political solution to the crisis based on the formation of a transitional government of national unity as well as parallel efforts towards facilitation of mediation between leaders of the various factions of the ruling party, and regret the failure to reach an agreement on power-sharing arrangements by March 2015. We commend the efforts of the UN Mission in South Sudan to fulfill its mandate. We condemn the attacks on UNMIS posts and IDP shelter sites.

46. We welcome the efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia aimed at establishing capable state authorities, solving acute socio-economic problems and building constructive relations with all the Somali regions. We recognize the tangible achievements of the Somalian army and the units of the peace keeping African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in fighting the Al-Shabaab extremist group. We express our concern about the growth of the terrorist threat in the countries of Northeast and East Africa. We strongly condemn the inhumane attack by Al Shabaab fighters on the University of Garissa, Kenya on 2 April 2015, which resulted in deplorable casualties. We express our solidarity with the

Government and the people of Kenya in their struggle against terrorism. We stress that there can be no justification for terrorism whatsoever.

47. We support the activities of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali as a part of the efforts of the international community to settle the Malian crisis. We are committed to a political solution to the conflict which would take into account positions of all the parties; we encourage constructive negotiations aimed at securing the territorial integrity and statehood of Mali. We note the signing of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali and commend the mediation efforts of the Algerian Government and other international and regional actors with a view to obtain a political solution for the crisis. We express grave concern about the attempts by various forces to destabilize the situation and disrupt the peace negotiations.

48. We remain concerned about the security and humanitarian situation in eastern parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC); the slow pace of the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants into the Congolese society; the illegal exploitation and exportation of natural resources; the high number of refugees from neighbouring countries and internally displaced persons present in the country. We stress the need to revive the implementation process of the framework agreement for peace, security and cooperation in the DRC and the region and to strengthen its government structures. We support the efforts by the Government of the DRC, supported by MONUSCO/UN to bring peace and stability to the DRC, and we call upon all involved parties to honor their obligations in order to achieve lasting peace and stability in the DRC. We commend the efforts to stabilize the region and protect civilian populations, and underline the importance of directing special attention to the situation of women and children in areas of conflict. We reiterate the need for the urgent and effective neutralization of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and

all other negative forces and armed groups. We believe that long-term stability in the DRC cannot be achieved by military means alone.

49. We are concerned about and closely follow the developments in the Republic of Burundi. We urge all actors involved in the current crisis to exercise restraint and resolve their political differences through inclusive dialogue, so that social peace and stability can be restored. We support regional efforts to find a political solution to this crisis and call upon the international community to remain engaged in supporting the regional facilitation of a political solution, as well as in the future socio-economic development of Burundi.

50. We note that the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) remains unstable: and that issues pertaining to security continue to cause concerns. We underline in this regard that the primary responsibility for developing mutually acceptable modalities of settlement by the conflicting parties is borne by the Government of the CAR, which should create prerequisites for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants into the civil society. We believe that a comprehensive national dialogue is the only way to achieve long-term stability in the CAR.

We note proceedings of the recently concluded Bangui Forum for Reconciliation that was held 4-11 May 2015 in the Central African Republic and call upon all stakeholders to effectively implement its recommendations.

51. We also express deep concern about the scourge of terrorism and violent extremism and condemn the terrorist acts perpetrated by Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram and other groups, which pose a serious threat to peace and stability in Africa.

52. We emphasize that, in the context of the unstable global financial and economic system and price volatility in global commodity markets, the development of the real sector of economy becomes particularly relevant.

We recognize that industrial development is a fundamental source of growth for the BRICS countries, which possess ample natural resources and significant labor, intellectual and technical capacities. Increasing production and export of high value-added goods will help BRICS countries enhance their national economies, contribute to their participation in global value chains and improve their competitiveness.

In this connection, we reaffirm the unique mandate of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to promote and accelerate inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

We are convinced about the importance of economic growth based on the balanced development of all economic sectors and on the development and introduction of advanced technologies and innovations, the mobilization of resources from financial institutions and the encouragement of private investment.

In this context, we note the potential to boost collaboration in developing technology and innovation in the potential sectors of BRICS economies, such as mining and metal industry, pharmaceuticals, information technology, chemicals and petrochemicals, both in the area of exploration and extraction of natural resources and in their processing, transformation and use, including through the promotion of a favourable investment climate and the implementation of mutually beneficial joint projects.

We stress the importance of intensifying cooperation of industrial production capabilities, establishing industrial parks and clusters, technology parks and engineering centers with a view to developing and introducing cutting-edge technologies, providing training for engineering and technical personnel and managers.

We highlight that encouraging investment in priority areas such as infrastructure, logistics and renewable sources of energy is a strategic goal for the sustainable growth of our economies. We reiterate our interest in joining efforts in order to face the challenge of competitiveness. In this regard, the BRICS countries agree to collaborate for the promotion of investment opportunities in railways, roadways, seaports and airports among our countries.

53. We reiterate our commitment to further develop agricultural cooperation, in particular, related to agricultural technologies and innovations, provision of food for the most vulnerable communities, mitigation of the negative impact of climate change on food security and the adaptation of agriculture to climate change, reducing volatility in agricultural markets, sharing up-to-date market information, enhancing trade and investment, including through participation in exhibitions, fairs, and investment forums. We actively support the UN General Assembly decision to declare 2015 the International Year of Soils, and express our intention to contribute to the implementation of effective policies and activities aimed at ensuring sustainable management and protection of soil resources.

We welcome cooperation of our delegations in international organizations, including in UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). We reinforce the importance of the work of the informal consultative group of BRICS countries in Rome.

54. We confirm that the improvement in safety levels of industrial and energy facilities is one of the priority areas for the BRICS countries. In this regard we welcome cooperation between the relevant regulatory bodies of the BRICS countries aimed at better protection of the public and environment in our countries. We also welcome the initiative of the Russian Federation to host the meeting of the BRICS Heads of Industrial and Energy Safety Authorities.

55. In order to ensure well-coordinated work on the post-2015 sustainable development indicators, we task the BRICS national statistical agencies to pursue collaboration on methodological approaches towards establishing these indicators to ensure their comparability and in this regard to cooperate closely on a regular basis within specialized UN commissions and committees.

56. We recognize the significance of connectivity in enhancing economic ties and fostering closer partnership among BRICS countries. We welcome and support BRICS countries' initiatives in promoting connectivity and infrastructure development.

We affirm that connectivity should be strengthened in a comprehensive, integrated and systematic way in the key areas of policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade and people-to-people connections, while making strenuous joint efforts to enhance policy consultation and coordination among BRICS countries on the basis of mutual benefit and win-win cooperation.

We recognize that enhanced people-to-people connectivity will further stimulate interaction among BRICS countries, people and society. We are committed to create favourable conditions for long-term cooperation in the field of tourism.

57. We note with satisfaction the progress achieved in coordination of efforts with regard to human resources and employment, social welfare and security, as well as social integration policy.

We expect the first meeting of the BRICS Ministers of Labour and Employment, which is to take place in February 2016 and will focus on the creation of decent jobs and information sharing on labour and employment issues, will lay a solid foundation for our long-term cooperation in the sphere of social relations and labour.

58. We welcome the outcomes of the first meeting of the BRICS Ministers responsible for population matters (Brasilia, 12 February 2015) and reaffirm our commitment to further cooperation on population and development-related matters that are of common interest, in accordance with the Agenda for BRICS Cooperation on Population Matters for 2015-2020 and in observance of the guiding principles and objectives of the Action Plan of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, and key actions for its further implementation to promote a long-term and balanced demographic development.

We underscore the relevance of the demographic transition and post-transitional challenges, including population ageing and mortality reduction, as well as the importance to effectively use the demographic dividend to advance economic growth and development and to address social issues, in particular gender inequality, elderly care, women's rights and issues facing young people and people with disabilities. We reiterate our commitment to ensure sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights for all.

We intend to develop our cooperation on population matters by using such formats as annual seminars of officials and experts and regular meetings of ministers responsible for the indicated issues.

For population matters to be more effectively integrated into our macroeconomic, financial and social policies we instruct our experts to hold in Moscow in November 2015 regular BRICS consultations on population matters dedicated to demographic challenges and to how they are related to the economic development of BRICS countries.

59. We acknowledge the transnational nature of migration, and, hence, the importance of mutual cooperation among BRICS countries in this area, including among the relevant national agencies. In this regard, we note the initiative of the

Russian Federation to hold the first BRICS Ministerial migration meeting (Heads of migration authorities) during the Russian Chairship.

We express regret for the large-scale loss of lives of migrants in the Mediterranean. We call upon the international community, in particular the countries concerned, to provide necessary assistance to these migrants, and to intensify collective efforts to address the root causes of the growing unregulated migration and displacement of people.

60. We reaffirm the right of every person, without any distinction, to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and to the quality of life that is necessary to maintain his or her own health and well-being and the health and well-being of his or her family.

We are concerned about growing and diversifying global threats posed by communicable and non-communicable diseases. They have a negative impact on economic and social development, especially in developing and in the least developed countries.

In this context, we commend the efforts made by the BRICS countries to contribute to enhanced international cooperation to support the efforts of countries to achieve their health goals, including the implementation of universal and equitable access to health services, and ensure affordable, good-quality service delivery while taking into account different national circumstances, policies, priorities and capabilities. We also seek enhanced partnerships by the international community and other stakeholders from both the public and private sectors, including the civil society and academia to improve health for all.

International community is struggling with increased antimicrobial resistance, which contributes to multiplying health risks. We are also concerned with the continuing spread of major diseases (HIV/AIDS, TB, malaria and others),

and with the emergence of infections with a pandemic potential, such as highly pathogenic influenza, novel coronavirus or Ebola.

BRICS countries have significant experience in combating communicable diseases. We are willing to cooperate and coordinate our efforts, including with relevant international organizations, to tackle global health challenges and ensure that BRICS countries jointly contribute to improve global health security. In this regard we will work together in such areas as:

- Management of risks related to emerging infections with pandemic potential;

- Compliance with commitments to stop the spread of, and eradicate, communicable diseases that hamper development (HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, "neglected" tropical diseases, poliomyelitis, measles);

- Research, development, production and supply of medicines aimed at providing increased access to prevention and treatment of communicable diseases.

We ask our relevant authorities to consider medium-term steps to be taken in these areas to seek the collective and individual input of BRICS countries to global health security from a public health perspective.

61. We are deeply concerned with the impact of the Ebola virus disease (EVD) in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, including its grave humanitarian, social and economic consequences for these countries and the potential spread of the disease. We highly commend the contribution and commitment of international health and humanitarian relief workers to immediately react to EVD outbreak and the crucial support and assistance provided by the international community to the affected countries of West Africa.

BRICS members contributed significantly in international response to EVD and in support to affected countries. What is more, unprecedented mobilization of national health systems allowed us to see how prepared we are and forced us to search for ways to improve national and regional response measures.

We fully support the work of the United Nations and other international institutions to stop the outbreak, limit the economic and social impact of the disease and prevent its recrudescence, as well as the efforts to reform systems of international response to public health emergencies to make them more effective in the future.

We confirm our commitment to do what is necessary individually and collectively to support these efforts addressing emergency and longer-term systematic issues and gaps in preparedness and response on national, regional and global level and further assist affected countries in combating the disease, as well as to contribute to the ongoing efforts to strengthen health sectors across the region including through the WHO and other international organizations.

62. We welcome the holding of the Second BRICS Science, Technology and Innovation Ministerial Meeting, which took place in Brasilia in March 2015, and celebrate the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation, which provides a strategic framework for cooperation in this field.

We note with interest the potential of BRICS Young Scientist Forum that has been agreed by the BRICS Ministers for Science, Technology and Innovation with India as coordinating country.

We reaffirm our willingness to strengthen cooperation in science, technology and innovation with the purposes of promoting inclusive and sustainable social and economic development, bridging the scientific and

technological gap between the BRICS countries and developed countries, providing a new quality of growth based on economic complementarity, as well as finding solutions to the challenges that the world economy faces today.

Taking note of our countries' efforts to create knowledge economies, whose drivers are science, technology and innovation, we will expand cooperation in joint research, design, development, manufacturing and promotion in the field of high-technology products.

Taking into consideration immense research and technological potential in the BRICS countries and building on the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovations, we reaffirm the importance of the development of a BRICS Research and Innovation Initiative which shall cover actions including:

- cooperation within large research infrastructures, including possible consideration of Megascience projects, to achieve scientific and technological breakthroughs in the key areas of cooperation outlined in the Memorandum;

- coordination of the existing large-scale national programs of the BRICS countries;

- development and implementation of a BRICS Framework Programme for funding multilateral joint research projects for research, technology commercialization and innovation involving science and technology ministries and centers, development institutes and national, as well as, if necessary, regional foundations that sponsor research projects;

- establishment of a joint Research and Innovation Platform.

These activities will be carried out as per BRICS STI Work Plan to be endorsed at the next BRICS Meeting of Ministers for Science, Technology and Innovation.

Based on the Brasília Declaration of BRICS Ministers of Science, Technology and Innovation, we encourage increased participation of business, academia and other relevant stakeholders for science, technology and innovation development among BRICS countries.

63. We note the direct interdependence between investment into education, the development of human capital and the improvement of economic performance. We reaffirm the need for equally accessible, high-quality, and lifelong education for all, in line with post-2015 development agenda.

We support efforts to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education. We recognize the importance of Vocational Education and Training as an instrument of improving employment opportunities, including for young people entering the labour market. We encourage students' mobility among BRICS countries.

We encourage exploring the possibilities of skills development cooperation through implementation of the international best practices, including relevant WorldSkills programmes.

We underscore the primary importance of higher education and research and call for exchanging of experiences in recognition of university diplomas and degrees. We call for working towards cooperation between competent authorities of the BRICS countries for accreditation and recognition. We support the independent initiatives to establish the BRICS Network University and the BRICS University League.

64. Taking into account 1966 UNESCO Declaration of Principles of International Cultural Cooperation and 2001 UNESCO Declaration on Cultural

Diversity, acknowledging that cultural diversity is the source of development and convinced that cultural exchanges and cooperation facilitate mutual understanding, we reiterate the importance of cooperation between the BRICS countries in the cultural sphere. Aiming at strengthening and developing friendly relation between our countries and peoples, we will continue to encourage in every possible way direct co-operation between our countries in the sphere of culture and art.

We welcome the signing of the Agreement between the Governments of the BRICS Member States on Cooperation in the Field of Culture. This Agreement will play an important role in expanding and deepening cooperation in the fields of culture and art, in promoting dialogue between cultures, which will help bring closer the cultures and peoples of our countries.

65. The United Nations will hold the Summit this September to review the progress of the MDGs and adopt the post-2015 development agenda, which will guide international development cooperation in the next 15 years. We attach great importance to the Summit and hope that the Summit will demonstrate the strategic vision of the leaders, the solidarity of all parties and their commitment to address global development issues through cooperation.

We reaffirm our commitment to the ambitious post-2015 development agenda, which is to be approved by the UN Summit. We reiterate that the post-2015 development agenda should be built on the foundation laid by the Millennium Development Goals, ensure completion of unfinished commitments and respond to new challenges. A post-2015 development agenda should furthermore reinforce the international community's commitment to eradicate poverty achieve sustained, equitable and inclusive economic growth and sustainable development, fully comply with all principles of the UN Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio in 1992, including, in particular, the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR). We stress the

importance of an integrated approach to the means of implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

We consider eradication of poverty as an indispensable requirement for and overarching objective towards the attainment of sustainable development, and stress the need for a coherent approach to attain inclusive and balanced integration of economic, social and environmental components of sustainable development. This approach involves working towards a single framework and set of goals that are universal in nature and applicable to all countries while taking into account differing national circumstances and respecting national policies and priorities. It is therefore imperative that we align and build upon existing agreements and the outcomes of multilateral summits and conferences on development. In this regard, we welcome the report of the Open Working Group of the UN GA on Sustainable Development Goals and emphasize that proposals of the Open Working Group should be the main basis for the integration of sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda.

66. We look forward to the success of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 13-16 July 2015. We call on all parties to engage in a fruitful dialogue with a view to adopting an ambitious and effective strategy for mobilizing resources for sustainable development.

Official Development Assistance plays an important role in financing for development. We urge developed countries to honour their commitments in full and on time in this regard. We recognize that the mobilization of domestic and international resources and an enabling domestic and international environment are key drivers for development and we call for a large-scale mobilization of resources from a variety of sources and for the effective use of financing in order to give

strong support to developing countries in their efforts to promote sustainable development.

We are committed to further strengthening and supporting South-South cooperation, while stressing that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to North-South cooperation which remains the main channel of international development cooperation.

We intend to strengthen partnerships for advancing international development and to begin interaction through dialogue, cooperation and exchange of experience in advancing international development of mutual interest to our countries. In this connection, we welcome plans for a meeting of senior officials of the BRICS countries in charge of international development cooperation.

67. We express our readiness to address climate change in a global context and at the national level and to achieve a comprehensive, effective and equitable agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

We stress the importance of transfer of technology and scientific knowledge to address climate change and its adverse effects and therefore agreed to conduct joint research on the priority issues of common interest.

68. We welcome the first meeting of environment ministers of our countries in Moscow on 22 April 2015 that marked the beginning of a new format of cooperation in the environmental area. We support the establishment of a platform for sharing environmentally sound technologies as a new international mechanism for public-private partnerships that can assist in addressing environmental challenges in our countries.

69. Recognizing the importance of monitoring global trends in the energy sector, including making forecasts regarding energy consumption, providing recommendations for the development of energy markets in order to ensure energy

security and economic development we call on our relevant agencies to consider the possibilities of energy cooperation within BRICS.

Taking into consideration the role of the energy sector in ensuring the sustainable economic development of the BRICS countries, we welcome balancing the interests of consumers, producers and transit countries of energy resources, creating the conditions for sustainable and predictable development of the energy markets.

Reaffirming the importance and necessity of advancing international cooperation in the field of energy saving, energy efficiency and developing energy efficient technologies, we welcome the holding of the first official meeting on energy efficiency in May 2015 and look forward to developing intra-BRICS cooperation in this area, as well as the establishment of the relevant platform. We welcome the Russian proposal to hold the first meeting of the BRICS Ministers of energy in the end of this year. We urge businesses of the BRICS countries to jointly develop energy efficient technologies and equipment and we call upon BRICS Business Council to study ways of cooperation in this field.

70. We welcome the development of relations between the parliaments, businesses and civil society institutions of the BRICS countries, aimed at promoting friendship and dialogue between our nations.

71. We welcomed the meeting of the Parliamentary Forum held in Moscow in June 2015 and the intention to strengthen and promote inter-parliamentary cooperation, including consultations on the margins of international parliamentary organizations for coordinating joint initiatives and positions.

72. We welcome fruitful meetings of BRICS Business Forum and BRICS Business Council as well as their efforts in strengthening business ties and promoting projects and initiatives between the BRICS countries.

We aim to create a favorable environment for further development of trade, investment and business cooperation between the BRICS countries, including through removing excessive administrative barriers and trade impediments.

We take note of the recommendation of the Business Council regarding the simplification of visa procedures for business travel between the BRICS countries and we ask our relevant authorities to continue to work towards this end.

73. We welcome activities of BRICS Think Tanks Council (BTTC) and the Long-Term Strategy for BRICS Report as well as the 7th Academic Forum in Moscow for expanding BRICS cooperation. We value this permanent platform for in-depth expert opinion and look forward to further consolidated high quality research, analysis, as well as effective think-tank discussions on issues of mutual interest.

The BTTC should further strive to enhance cooperation in future-oriented research, knowledge sharing, capacity building and policy advice between think tanks in BRICS countries.

74. We welcome the initiative of the Russian Chairship in hosting Civil BRICS Forum, which contributes to a dialogue between civil society organizations, academia, business and governments of the BRICS countries on a wide range of important socio-economic issues. We also welcome holding of the Trade Unions Forums as well as the launch of "youth dimension" of our cooperation under the Russian Chairship.

75. We welcome the signing of the MoU on the Creation of the Joint BRICS Website among our Foreign Ministries. It will serve as a platform for informing people of our countries and the wider international community about BRICS principles, goals and practices. We will explore the possibility of developing the BRICS Website as a virtual secretariat.

76. India, China, South Africa and Brazil express their sincere gratitude to the Government and people of Russia for hosting the Seventh BRICS Summit in Ufa.

77. Russia, China, South Africa and Brazil convey their appreciation to India for its offer to host the Eighth BRICS Summit in 2016 and extend their full support to that end.