

India-Brazil-South Africa dialogue forum seventh Trilateral Commission Meeting Ministerial Communiqué

8 Mar 2011

The Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India, H E Mr S M Krishna, the Minister of External Relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil, HE Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, and the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, H E Ambassador Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, met in New Delhi on 8 March 2011 for the VII IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Commission.

The ministers reaffirmed the commitment of their respective countries to further deepening the dialogue and cooperation within the IBSA framework at inter-governmental, social, people-to-people and business-to-business levels. They underscored the important role India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) is playing in strengthening political coordination among the three countries on global issues of mutual interest. In this rapidly changing global order, the ministers underscored the increased strategic importance of IBSA as a forum of developing country democracies from three different continents based on shared values which play a critical role as an influential mechanism for further strengthening and fostering South-South cooperation and safeguarding and advancing the interests of the South, particularly in regard to reform of global governance.

The three ministers confirmed their countries' commitment to democratic values, inclusive social development and economic growth and their belief in multilateralism as the guiding principle to deal with peace, security and development issues. The ministers emphasised the growing interdependence between development and security and its importance for sustainable peace.

The ministers noted with satisfaction that there is a wide range of global issues on which the three countries share common positions. In this context, they stressed the common objective of making structures of global governance more democratic, representative, transparent, and to enhance their legitimacy by ensuring a more effective role for developing countries.

Global Issues

United Nations Reform and Security Council Reform

The ministers noted that this meeting was taking place when the three countries are non-permanent members of the United Nations (UN) Security Council. They reiterated their firm commitment to multilateralism and reaffirmed the need for the UN to become more responsive to and coherent with the priorities of developing countries. They emphasised the need for urgent reform of the UN Security Council, including expansion of permanent and non-permanent categories of its membership, with increased participation of developing countries in both categories.

Towards this end, the representation of developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America is essential. Such reform in the security council is of utmost importance to reflect contemporary geopolitical realities and to enhance its representativeness, effectiveness and legitimacy. The ministers reaffirmed their resolve to maintain their close coordination as well as to reach out to the broader UN membership, in order to advance towards concrete results in the on-going intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, by the end of the current session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

The ministers underscored that the concurrent presence of all three IBSA countries in the Security Council during the year 2011, provides a unique opportunity to work closely together in order to bring their perspectives into the work of the council and strengthen the voice of the South. They reiterated the commitment of their countries to consult and coordinate their approaches and positions in New York, Geneva and in capitals, on issues on the agenda of the Security Council.

The ministers emphasised the central role of peacekeeping operations and the need to accompany them with peace building programmes so as to enhance stability.

International terrorism

The ministers agreed that terrorism constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, hinders the enjoyment of human rights, and undermines social and economic development of democratic societies. They reiterated their strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stressed that there can be no justification, whatsoever, for any acts of terrorism. They reaffirmed the central role of the United Nations in coordinating the international action against terrorism within the framework of the UN Charter and in accordance with the international law. The ministers stressed that the fight against terrorism needs strong international cooperation and agreed to enhance their mutual cooperation to prevent terrorist attacks and punish perpetrators, financiers and others involved in such acts, according to international and domestic legislations. In this context, the leaders urged all UN member states to urgently conclude and adopt the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

Climate change

The ministers reiterated the importance of working towards the establishment of an equitable outcome for the current climate change negotiations at the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP 17) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 7th Meeting of the Parties (CMP7) to the Kyoto Protocol to be held in Durban, South Africa in November/December 2011. They stressed that the result should be reached in an inclusive and transparent manner, and that the Bali Road Map should guide the future work of the Parties. Furthermore, the outcomes of COP17 should build on the agreements reached at COP16 in Cancun, Mexico in accordance with the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. In this respect, the ministers called for the speedy operationalisation of the Green Climate Fund, Technology Mechanism and the Adaptation Committee.

International financial and economic crisis

The ministers remained concerned about the sustainability of the current global economic recovery. They noted that coordinated response in the aftermath of the global crisis, and the resultant recovery, even if it is not complete, has clearly demonstrated the merits of a coordinated approach. They urged the G-20 and like-minded countries to take further steps towards achieving the shared objective of ensuring a full return to growth and employment, and reformed and strengthened global financial system, and sustainable and balanced growth. They also emphasised that it was important to explore ways to improve the international monetary system to ensure systemic stability in the global economy.

The ministers underscored the importance of sustaining long-term capital flows to developing countries to stimulate investment, especially in infrastructure, to address the development deficit and increase global demand. They called upon Multilateral Development Banks and Regional Development Banks to play a major role in this regard.

The ministers welcomed the decisions of the G20 Leaders in the Seoul Summit in November 2010, including on International Financial Institutions reforms, financial regulatory reforms and development agenda embodied in the Multi-Year Action Plan. They emphasised that reforming international financial institutions, should aim for achieving equitable distribution of voting power between developed and developing countries. While recognising the importance of continuing on repairing financial sector and reforming financial regulation for global financial stability, they welcomed the Multi-Year Action Plan comprising nine development pillars.

Multilateral trade negotiations

The ministers reaffirmed their commitment to an open, transparent and rule-based international trading regime and called for an early conclusion of the Doha Development

Round with a balanced outcome which ensures the development needs of the developing countries, especially the least developed countries.

They recognised that the existing draft modalities, which should be the basis for ongoing negotiations, already require the developing countries to offer unprecedented levels of concessions. Keeping in mind the terms of the Doha Development Agenda, they urged WTO members to ensure that any additional requests by developed countries must be matched by equivalent concessions, in order to maintain the general balance and preserve the development dimension of the round.

The ministers reaffirmed their commitment toward trade liberalisation and enhanced South-South cooperation.

Intellectual property rights

The ministers emphasised the need for an equitable international system of rules governing intellectual property, allowing among others, for the protection of the indigenous knowledge systems against abuse and for preventing the misappropriation of genetic resources, and associated traditional knowledge.

They warned against attempts at developing new international rules on intellectual property outside the appropriate fora of WTO and World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). They also called upon a comprehensive implementation of the Development Agenda by WIPO.

Disarmament and non-proliferation

The ministers renewed their support for global nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation and for the complete, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, within a specified timeframe . They committed to work in close cooperation in order to help the international community to expedite the achievement of this goal globally. Brazil and South Africa welcomed India's engagement with an interest in participation in the relevant international multilateral export control regimes and utilisation of their guidelines.

South-South cooperation

The ministers reaffirmed the role of development as an instrument for the achievement of sustainable peace and security as well as in preventing conflict and checking the relapse of countries into conflict. In this context, they reaffirmed the importance of South-South Cooperation, being implemented jointly through the IBSA Facility for Hunger and Poverty alleviation.

The ministers reiterated that South-South cooperation is complementary to and not a substitute for North-South cooperation. In this context, they called upon the developed countries to fulfil their commitments by achieving the target of 0.7 percent Gross National Income (GNI) as Official Development Assistance (ODA) to developing countries.

Disaster management

The ministers underscored the need to enhance disaster management cooperation to enhance disaster prevention and response capabilities of IBSA countries as well as to learn from each other's experience in this field. In this context, they urged their respective officials to explore the areas for cooperation in disaster management.

Global internet governance

The IBSA countries are committed to improving the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and its outcomes, with a view to linking it to the broader dialogue and policy making on global internet governance, including through more effective interface with relevant inter-governmental organisations and other institutions. The ministers noted with satisfaction the advances in coordinating positions for the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) follow-up mechanisms, for example, with the IBSA joint statement about enhanced cooperation on internet governance. They acknowledge the value of multi-stakeholder participation on internet governance discussions and reaffirmed their commitment to

continuously improve it - with the special aim to achieve full and equal participation of stakeholders from developing countries - and to contribute to the improvement of openness, transparency, diversity of ideas and accountability in the decision making and decision shaping processes regarding global internet governance.

Regional issues

Middle East peace process

The ministers reviewed the situation in the Middle East following their previous statement on the situation in the Middle East that was made at the 4th IBSA Summit in April 2010, and expressed deep concern regarding the deteriorating situation, also in view of recent incidents and regional political developments. They reiterated their call for the urgent resumption of negotiations that will lead to a two-state solution, with the creation of a sovereign, democratic, independent, united and viable Palestinian State, coexisting peacefully alongside Israel, within secure, pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

In the context of mass protests in countries of the Middle East and North Africa, as an expression of the aspirations of the peoples of these countries for reform, the ministers expressed the hope that the situation will be resolved in a peaceful manner, in the best interests of the respective peoples. The ministers expressed their deep concern with the present situation in Libya and manifested hope that a peaceful solution for the crisis may be found, in the best interests of the Libyan people. They underscored that a no-fly zone on the Libyan air space or any coercive measures additional to those foreseen in Resolution 1970 can only be legitimately contemplated in full compliance with the UN Charter and within the Security Council of the United Nations.]

Afghanistan

The ministers emphasised the imperative for the international community to maintain its commitment to render assistance to the government and people of Afghanistan in ensuring security and development and to make concerted efforts to restore peace and stability in Afghanistan. They underlined the need for adequate development of the Afghan National Security Forces to enable Afghanistan to defend its sovereignty and independence and for strengthening Afghan capacities to deliver public goods to its citizens. They expressed concern at the resurgence of the Taliban, Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups and the continuing existence of safe havens and sanctuaries.

While reaffirming their long term commitment to a democratic, pluralistic and stable Afghanistan, the Ministers highlighted the need for strict observance of the sanctions regime against persons and entities listed by UNSC Committee 1267'.

India-LDC (Least Developed Countries) Ministerial Conference

Brazil and South Africa appreciated India's hosting of India-LDC (Least Developed Countries) Ministerial Conference on 18 to 19 February 2011 under the theme, "Harnessing the positive contribution of South-South Cooperation for development of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs)" to provide inputs to the 4th UN-LDC Conference to be hosted by Turkey in Istanbul during 9 to 13 May 2011.

AU and NEPAD

The ministers extended warm congratulations to the African Union (AU) as 2011 marks ten years since the adoption of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as the AU flagship socio-economic programme in Lusaka in July 2001. The ministers welcomed the establishment of the NEPAD High-Level Sub-Committee on Infrastructure and South Africa's championing of the North-South Rail and Road projects, amongst other regional projects. The ministers noted with satisfaction the growing cooperation of Brazil and India with the AU.

Sudan

The ministers welcomed the delivering of a peaceful and credible referendum for the people of Southern Sudan and the immediate acceptance of the results by the Government of Sudan which would lead to the establishment of an independent and viable state of South Sudan. The ministers also called for the early conclusion of outstanding issues such as the referendum for Abyei, border demarcation, natural resources and economic issues, citizenship, security and other issues. The ministers urged the international community to honour their commitments towards Sudan.

The ministers announced their intention that the IBSA Fund will identify reconstruction and development project proposals for discussion with both North and South Sudan.

Côte d'Ivoire

The ministers indicated their support for the AU High Level Panel for the Resolution of the Crisis in Côte d'Ivoire which was established per AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at the Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Addis Ababa on 28 January 2011. They urged all parties to refrain from violence and to cooperate with the AU in finding a lasting solution for the country.

Madagascar

The ministers expressed their continued support for the mediation efforts by the SADC to find an amicable and acceptable solution to the political crisis in that country and called on all parties to cooperate with the Head of the mediation team, i.e. former President J Chissano of Mozambique.

Somalia

The ministers remained deeply concerned at the prevailing situation in Somalia and its impact on the countries of the East African region and the Horn of Africa. The increasing instability and lack of progress in the internal reconciliation process is much regretted and they called on all role players in Somalia to commit themselves to an all inclusive process that will usher in an era of peace in Somalia. IBSA stands ready to support international efforts towards reconciliation, reconstruction and development of Somalia.

IBSA sectoral cooperation: progress report

The ministers took note with satisfaction of the report of the focal points on the progress made by the working groups which met in the New Delhi prior to the Trilateral Commission, namely, Culture, Trade and Investment, Public Administration, Agriculture, Environment, and Information Society. They stressed the importance of regular meeting of the working groups and emphasised the need for all Working Groups to hold at least one meeting a year.

Energy

The ministers noted that energy is an area of great mutual interest for cooperation under IBSA. They welcomed the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation on solar energy at the 4th IBSA Summit in April 2010. The ministers expressed satisfaction at holding of a Workshop on production and use of bio-fuels by Brazil in September 2010 as well as a Workshop on Technical specifications and standards for bio-fuels hosted by South Africa in December 2010. In order to fulfill this cycle of activities, they would welcome the holding of a Workshop on Biofuels Production Technologies to be organised by the Indian Government, as previously agreed during the VI Energy WG meeting.

Agriculture

The ministers underscored the need for further deepening of cooperation in the field of agriculture and, in this context, appreciated the decision of the Joint Working Group on Agriculture, to undertake collaborative activities in the areas of diagnostics and control of trans-boundary diseases of animals, training programmes in viticulture, integrated pest management and soya bean production and value addition would be of mutual interest and benefit.

Public administration and governance

The ministers noted that IBSA is uniquely placed to cooperate in the areas of public administration, governance and service delivery. The Joint Working Group on Public Administration actively engaged in promoting transparency, accountability, efficiency and quality of service rendered to citizens by implementing the IBSA Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) through an Annual Plan of Action, identifying various projects/programmes for exchange and cooperation among IBSA countries.

Defence

The ministers noted progress made under the Joint Working Group on Defence particularly the successful holding of 2nd IBSA Naval Military Exercise – IBSAMAR-II along the South African southern and eastern coast from 8 to 27 September 2010 with the participation from all three countries and India as the lead nation. They noted that IBSAMAR III is scheduled to take place in 2012 with Brazil as the rotating lead nation. The ministers recommended further deepening of cooperation in areas such as exchange of information in the areas of piracy, international terrorism, cybernetic security, etc.

Revenue administration

The ministers noted the holding of 5th Heads of Revenue Administration Working Group (HRAWG) in Salvador, Brazil from 4 to 7 October 2010 and welcomed the signing of a MoU for exchange of tax information through a centre located in India. They noted that the three countries could benefit from exchange of information in the areas of transfer pricing/ international taxation, risk profiling, barriers in tax laws and procedures, tax avoidance and abuse of double taxation agreements and capacity building in revenue administration.

Transport

The ministers underscored that connectivity is at the core of strengthening trilateral cooperation. Cooperation between Maritime Educational Institutes of the three countries for human resource development and capacity building is of mutual interest. Three countries can also explore possibilities of mutually beneficial investment in maritime infrastructure. They urged Working Group to come up with concrete suggestions to deepen cooperation in this area.

Trade and investment

Appreciating the work of the Trade and Investment Joint Working Group, the ministers expressed satisfaction that the three nodal agencies in the field of standardisation, viz. Bureau of Indian standards (BIS), South African Bureau of standards (SABS) and the Brazilian Association of Technical Norms (ABNT) have initiated discussion in order to devise a suitable frame work for structured implementation of the MOU on Trade Facilitation for Standards, Technical and Conformity Assessment. They noted that a Tri- Nation Summit on Micro, small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) being organised by NSIC of India, SEBRAE of Brazil and SEDA of South Africa has now become a part of the IBSA Summit. They endorsed the recommendation of the Joint Working Group for strengthening of the existing business linkages by having regular membership in the IBSA Business Forum; enhancing interaction between the financial stakeholders in the three countries; and regular exchange of information about the trade and investment promotion events in the three countries.

Tourism

The ministers highlighted the considerable potential for cooperation in tourism and noted suggestions to hold a Workshop on Beach Tourism (Brazil), a Workshop on National parks and Eco-Tourism (South Africa) and a Workshop on Rural Tourism (India).

Science and technology

The ministers noted with appreciation the work of the joint working group on science and technology which has identified R&D projects for joint funding and has agreed on fresh joint projects. They also noted with satisfaction successful holding of three 'Nano-schools' – one each in India, Brazil and South Africa - during 2009/10 for training of young researchers

towards human capacity development. The ministers recommended the scheduled IBSA satellite technical meetings to take place prior to the summit.

The ministers also converged on the idea that there should be increased dialogue on the existing modalities of innovation in the three countries. In this regard, the working group on science & technology shall entail initiatives aimed at better exchanging information and knowledge about innovation programmes, processes and policies in the three countries, mainly those that promote the direct transfer of scientific and technological knowledge to the productive sector.

Information society

The ministers noted that information and technology holds significant potential for mutually beneficial trilateral cooperation. The ministers noted the importance of projects/activities including, measurement of e-readiness in IBSA countries, e-governance standards, IBSA Digital Inclusion Award etc, identified for cooperation in this area.

The ministers also noted that the IBSA Website could be developed into an interactive tool and platform for exchange of information among the working groups and other departments engaged in IBSA cooperation as well as for disseminating information to the public to create awareness about IBSA.

The ministers took note of the meeting of the Joint Working Group on Information Society which has identified bridging digital divide, collaboration in FOSS (Free and Open Source Software), e-governance, Quality Assurance in e-governance, measurements of e-readiness and exchange of experts, etc as areas for cooperation. For development of industry-to-industry cooperation, the IT and software industry association of India, Brazil and South Africa, the Ministers suggested increased participation in each other's annual events, forums and conferences on ICT.

Environment

The ministers underlined that cooperation on environment and climate has the potential to forge common stand on various related issues being discussed and negotiated in the international conventions and agreements. The ministers noted that there exists significant potential of knowledge and information sharing between scientific and research organisations of the three member countries, especially in the field of forestry, environment and community development.

Health

The ministers stressed on the need for further strengthening cooperation and sharing of experiences in Public health sector. They noted the Seminar on counterfeit medicines that was held in Geneva in October 2010.

Culture

The ministers expressed satisfaction at the progress in the work of the joint working group on culture. They affirmed that it is an important mechanism to further deepen cooperation in this field among the three countries. India has proposed to host an IBSA Poetry Festival in India 2011. South Africa would consider this to be included as one of the side events of the next IBSA Summit. South African side has also proposed to enhance the visibility of IBSA cultural cooperation by organising cultural events during the Summit in which India and Brazil shall also participate. The three side also agreed to actively promote participation in each other's cultural festivals to reflect IBSA partnership in the cultural field.

People-to-people cooperation

The ministers stressed that people-to-people cooperation plays an important role in enhancing the importance and visibility of the IBSA Dialogue Forum among the peoples of the three countries. In this context, they encouraged all IBSA Forums including Women's Forum, the Parliamentary Forum, the Business Forum, Tri Nation Forum, the Editor's Forum, the Academic Forum and Local Government Forum to meet before the next Summit. The

ministers complemented the Government of Brazil for bringing out a catalogue of Books of Reference on India, Brazil and South Africa.

IBSA facility for poverty and hunger alleviation

The ministers took note of the achievements of IBSA Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation through various developmental projects such as in Haiti, Palestine, Guinea-Bissau, Cambodia, Burundi, and Cape Verde. They called upon the concerned parties to take expeditious steps for early implementation and completion of developmental projects. They reiterated their commitment to contribute at least US\$ 1 million per year to the IBSA Trust Fund.

The ministers furthermore endorsed the decision of the 15th IBSA Focal Points meeting to review the guidelines and to discuss ways and means for IBSA Member States to ensure that there is greater effectiveness, visibility and greater utilization of their own resources wherever possible. They also decided to support the construction of a Centre for People with Special Needs in Nablus, Palestine.

Final remarks

The ministers of Brazil and India accepted with gratitude the South African proposal to host the 8th IBSA Trilateral Commission Meeting in the year 2012 on mutually convenient dates.

The ministers of Brazil and South Africa thanked the External Affairs Minister of India for hosting the meeting and warm hospitality extended to their delegations.

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