



**BUILDING FOR RESILIENCE, INNOVATION, COOPERATION AND
SUSTAINABILITY**

XI BRICS CULTURE MINISTERS' MEETING

Bhopal, India, 8th August, 2026



DECLARATION OF THE XI BRICS CULTURE MINISTERS' MEETING

Preamble

We, the Ministers of Culture of the BRICS Member States, under the Chairship of the Republic of India, met in Bhopal, India, on 8th August, 2026, under the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability"; agree to promote BRICS culture cooperation with people centered approach for shared future of humanity:

Recalling the commitments under the Agreement between the Governments of the BRICS States on Cooperation in the Field of Culture signed on 9 July 2015, and the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Agreement 2022-2026 signed on 24 May 2022, as well as the Maropeng Declaration- 2018; the Curitiba Declaration- 2019; the Moscow Declaration- 2020; the New Delhi Declaration- 2021; the Beijing Declaration- 2022; the Mpumalanga Declaration- 2023; the Saint Petersburg Declaration- 2024; and the Brasilia Declaration- 2025;

Guided by the principles of mutual respect and understanding, sovereign equality, solidarity, consensus, and reaffirming our commitment to multilateralism, human rights and respect for the diversity of cultures and intercultural dialogue, as essential pillars of BRICS cooperation and engagement with the wider Global South and recognising the adoption of the UNGA Resolution 'International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations';

Highlighting the growing contribution of the cultural and creative industries and sectors towards inclusive growth and sustainable development, reaffirming the need to safeguard Intellectual Property Rights, fair and equitable remuneration, and the livelihoods of artists and creators in accordance with national laws and frameworks, recognising the transformative potential of digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence in development of cultural industries and resources and in supporting cultural creation, preservation and



accessibility, recognizing the need for ethical, transparent and responsible development and use of Artificial Intelligence, and safeguard people-centered creativity, cultural diversity and the rights of cultural professionals in the face of emerging digital challenges, while respecting cultural diversity, data security, and in accordance with national laws and international frameworks;

Recognizing risks relating to misappropriation and misrepresentation of knowledge, heritage, and cultural values that are insufficiently represented in datasets and Artificial Intelligence models, Artificial Intelligence systems must be developed with rigorous respect to the linguistic, tradition, cultural, and demographic diversity of all countries, taking into account the ethical, transparent, and accountable frameworks, such as UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence;

Emphasising the importance of protecting, preserving, documenting, digitising and promoting tangible and intangible cultural heritage while advancing cooperation on the return and restitution of cultural properties to their countries in accordance with national legislation and applicable international legal frameworks, recognising their role in promoting social cohesion, cultural and historical justice, reconciliation, as well as in strengthening intergenerational knowledge transmission, safeguarding cultural continuity and collective memory, facilitating access to cultural heritage, and promoting mutual understanding and cooperation among Member States;

Recognising the importance of safeguarding, sustaining, transmitting and promoting traditional knowledge systems and community-based cultural practices with the meaningful participation of relevant communities and knowledge holders and in accordance with national laws and policies;

Emphasising the role of culture as an enabler and a driver for sustainable development, highlighting its intrinsic value beyond social, environmental and economic benefits, and as a common good of humanity while taking note of ongoing discussions under UNESCO



cultural initiatives and the World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development (MONDIACULT) framework 2022 and 2025 on advancing the contribution of culture to sustainable development, including the Sustainable Development Goals;

Welcoming the expansion of BRICS and the participation of new members and partner countries, which enrich cultural dialogue, cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges among BRICS Member States;

Encouraging all BRICS Members to join the BRICS Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Culture (2015);

1. We pledge to further strengthen our cooperation through the following:

- 1.1 As agreed in St. Petersburg Declaration in 2024 and further decided in Brasilia Declaration in 2025 we reaffirm the advancement, effective and result oriented functioning of the platform on Cultural and Creative Industries and Creative Economy. This platform shall foster dialogue and activities on the scope and components of Cultural and Creative Economy, promote shared understanding of its definition and its contribution, facilitate exchange of methodologies, experiences and best practices, strengthening a network of cultural and creative industry practitioners including artists and writers. To further strengthen this initiative, we encourage the development of governance principles on voluntary and consensus basis and in accordance with applicable domestic laws and international frameworks and appointment of focal points in each Member Country working within the BRICS Working Group on Culture under respective Chairship and use of digital tools to facilitate networking and wider market access for constituents of creative economy amongst Member Countries;



- 1.2 We recognize that in a future international development framework to be decided by the Member States, culture should be considered as an independent goal in its own right;
- 1.3 We encourage to exchange information and share best practices in cultural sector including in the fields of training and capacity building of artists and cultural practitioners. We shall look into possibilities to support the development of joint projects and strengthen policy coordination on issues of common concern on voluntary basis and through consensus, in accordance with national laws and international frameworks. We take notice of Indian Chairship's initiative to create and develop an Artist Registry on pilot basis for voluntarily participating members;
- 1.4 Encourage and explore opportunities for joint multinational nominations to UNESCO Conventions and Programmes, recognising cultural heritage amongst Member States on voluntary basis as per national laws and international frameworks;
- 1.5 Promote documentation, provenance research and information-sharing on dispersed, and stolen cultural objects and shared cultural heritage, including through Artificial Intelligent-enabled visual identification and matching tools for locating missing, stolen or dispersed objects of potential significance that are in circulation or being sold in online and in-person public auctions, heritage markets and exhibitions as per the domestic laws and international framework;
- 1.6 Implement joint actions to strengthen cooperation in the subject of the return and restitution of cultural property and objects of spiritual, ancestral, historical and cultural value, amongst others, to their countries of origin, by sharing experiences, national procedures, legislation and successful cases, by



promoting heritage education and museum education, exchanging information amongst government instances and experts, as well as aligning priorities and policies in multilateral organizations with the aim of fostering progress in the field, and by extending mutual support in the return of cultural property to the countries of origin;

- 1.7 Recognize the contribution of Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge Systems and other sustainable customary and cultural practices and encourage the identification and documentation of Traditional Knowledge Systems, Traditional Cultural Expressions and sustainable cultural practices through the participation of relevant communities, researchers and experts and facilitate the exchange of experiences and best practices;
- 1.8 Encourage institutional cooperation among museums, libraries, archives and manuscript centers through joint research, digitisation projects, professional exchanges and capacity-building to strengthen cooperation and facilitate on a voluntary basis the development of innovative tools, including Artificial Intelligence-enabled solutions among others for the conservation, digitisation, manuscript studies, capacity-building and safeguarding documentary heritage including through existing BRICS mechanisms;
- 1.9 Encourage the exchange of best practices and enhance legal and institutional mechanisms to enforce the right to fair and equitable remuneration for holders of copyright and related rights in the digital environment, along with measures to ensure authors' and artists' control over their copyrighted works in digital platforms. Strengthen our commitment to discuss and formulate solutions and standards regarding transparency and fair and equitable remuneration for the use of copyrighted works in the context of Artificial Intelligence systems in



accordance with domestic laws and international frameworks while preserving and promoting human creativity and cultural diversity;

2. **Other Areas of Cooperation**

- 2.1 Encourage the new BRICS members to join the existing BRICS Alliances by the leading cultural institutions in cooperation with the institutions overseeing the existing BRICS Alliances and encourage members to support the holding of cultural events, to strengthen institutional partnerships and people-to-people exchanges;
- 2.2 Encourage the exploration of diverse financing mechanisms, including co-financing arrangements and financing through multilateral financial institutions for enhancing access to finance for cultural practitioners and creative enterprises;
- 2.3 Promote and facilitate exchanges amongst museums, monuments and archaeological sites and other cultural institutions and encourage cooperation amongst relevant public and private training and research institutions for capacity-building, safeguarding and protecting cultural heritage;
- 2.4 Enhance access to cultural activities and heritage for persons with disabilities through cooperation and the exchange of experiences among BRICS Member States;
- 2.5 Explore other emerging areas of cultural cooperation consistent with the priorities and interests of BRICS Members;



2.6 We commend the Republic of India for its leadership of BRICS cultural cooperation in 2026 and welcome its hosting of the BRICS Cultural Festival and the forthcoming BRICS Theatre Festival, which foster cultural exchange and strengthen people-to-people ties among BRICS Member and Partner States;

2.7 We extend our support to the People's Republic of China for its BRICS Chairship in 2027;

The English language version of this Declaration is adopted in the city of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India, on 8th August 2026, following the Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Culture under the Chairship of India.
