

**Minister Pandor's opening remarks at the 6th BRICS
education ministers meeting**

Grand Westin Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa

10 July 2018

Mr Leandro Cardoso, Head of International Affairs Office
Ministry of Education of Brazil

Minister/Head of the Russian delegation;

Dr Satya Pal Singh, Minister of State for Higher Education,
Republic of India

Mr. ZHU Zhiwen, Vice Minister, Ministry of Education, People's
Republic of China

A very warm welcome to our guests from Brazil, Russia, India
and China - Mr Leandro Cardoso, Dr Satya Pal Singh, Mr. ZHU
Zhiwen and

Thank you for attending and participating in this meeting of
BRICS Education Ministers. South Africa is very pleased to
host you, and it is indeed an honour and privilege to have you
here, in the Mother City. I hope that you've all rested after last
night's dinner where we also shared informally views on our
respective education systems.

Yesterday our senior officials had the opportunity to engage in
a range of issues regarding both higher education and
educational diplomacy and about what we plan to do as a
collective.

South Africa was recently elected to fill a non-permanent seat
on the United Nations Security Council for the term 2019 –
2020. As South Africans, we would like to express our
appreciation to our BRICS partners for the support in endorsing

South Africa's candidature.

Since the first meeting of BRICS Education Ministers in 2013, we have seen a continuous growth in our education cooperation. The BRICS Think Tank Council and the Academic Forum are critical to contributing to the achievement of the stated goals of the BRICS partnership.

The establishment of the BRICS Network University demonstrates that as BRICS countries we are committed to strengthening our partnerships in education and research. I look forward to receiving the report on the outcomes of the Stellenbosch meeting that took place a few days ago.

Previous meetings of BRICS education ministers have resulted in a number of agreements: to collaborate on the strengthening of linkages and partnerships between BRICS universities; the strengthening of education systems for quality and equity; promoting excellence in higher education; the improvement of skills development for growth that would benefit all; and supporting education in other developing countries.

As BRICS partners, we've explored issues around internationalisation of higher education and academic mobility, equitable quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities.

At the 2017 Minister's meeting in China, it was agreed that we would share experiences and practices with regard to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) and foster a more favourable policy environment to achieve this goal as well as advocate for global education policies that take into account our common concerns and priorities.

Our governments share a common vision on education and training as being the key to sustainable human and socio-economic development. We have all, in various ways, adopted and implemented programmes and strategies to ensure the responsiveness and quality of our educational systems at all levels.

I trust that this year's focus on "Deepening BRICS Education Partnerships and Exchanges", will ensure that we consolidate the progress we have made over the past five years and indeed contribute to deepening our partnerships and exchanges in higher education and, in particular, in technical and vocational education and training.

The changing global environment is increasingly demanding that we focus on how education and training in BRICS countries can prepare young people for the Fourth Industrial Revolution and create niche areas in which we can have a competitive advantage.

How should we, as governments, respond to the demands that rapidly changing technology places on our education and training systems?

How do we prepare young people to enter a world of work that is unrecognisable from the one that we first entered?

How do we prepare them for meaningful participation in a society that is very different from the one that we grew up in?

We also need to look at how we can use the capabilities presented by the fourth industrial revolution to solve developmental challenges such as in healthcare and education, and the improvement of services.

At the same time we need to ensure that those who do not have purchase in the current labour market, do not get left even further behind as the Fourth Industrial Revolution gains momentum.

Platforms for training and skills development are caught between catering for a cohort of unemployed youth and catering for future needs.

Collaboration between government, civil society, labour and business is needed to shape an agenda that ensures we advance in an inclusive manner.

Senior officials have reflected on BRICS university partnerships, technical and vocational education and training, work-based learning and digitisation. I look forward to hearing your perspectives on these important issues.

South Africa is in the process of finalising a policy for the internationalisation for higher education.

This policy acknowledges the important role that internationalisation plays in higher education.

We seek to use internationalisation to ensure the competitiveness of our higher education system, to advance its quality, and to benefit society. This policy aims to enable our system to reap the benefits of internationalisation and mitigate the risks that are associated with it.

I will speak more about this when I do the presentation on university partnerships later on in the day.

Once more I would like to welcome you and hope that we will jointly identify concrete areas for our collaboration. I also hope that while you are here you will have the opportunity to sample some of the many delights that Cape Town has to offer.

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