

Participation in BRICS Culture Ministers' Meeting

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Indian delegation led by Union Culture Shri Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat participated in the Xth BRICS Ministers of Culture Meeting' held on 26 May 2025 in Brasilia, Brazil. The Declaration adopted in the BRICS Culture Ministers' Meeting (CMM) is placed at Annexure.

The implementation of initiatives envisaged under BRICS platform are nation specific and not region specific.

DECLARATION OF THE X BRICS MINISTERS OF CULTURE MEETING

Preamble

We, the BRICS Ministers of Culture under the chairship of the Federative Republic of Brazil, under the theme **“Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance”**, met on 26 May 2025 in the city of Brasilia to seek further progress in our cultural cooperation agenda:

Adhering to the BRICS spirit of consensus, mutual respect and understanding, openness, solidarity, and sovereign equality within BRICS cooperation;

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; and the Saint Petersburg Declaration – 2024;

Reinforcing the need for enhanced cooperation, dialogue and understanding as pathways for a strengthened multilateralism, *acknowledging* the cultural diversity and the plurality of sustainable development approaches of the BRICS Members and Global South Countries which favour a more sustainable world, and *valuing* the perspectives of the Global South in global governance;

Calling for more efforts to respect diversity of cultures, highly value inheritance, innovation and creativity, jointly advocating robust international people-to-people exchanges and cooperation;

Recognising the power of culture as a key enabler and driver of sustainable development by the promotion of creativity, innovation, inclusive economic growth, social cohesion and environmental protection;

Highlighting the intrinsic value of culture for the development of societies, facing the challenges and considering the opportunities posed by the increasing use of ICT, including artificial intelligence tools in the digital environment;

Acknowledging the broad positive effects for societies and states brought upon by the return of cultural property to their countries of origin, and recognising the moral imperative to take all measures in this respect, with a view to ensure the full enjoyment of everyone's right to take part in cultural life and access their cultural heritage;

Welcoming the enlargement of the BRICS family, through the addition of Indonesia and the establishment of the category of partner countries, which enables the Global South to forge a stronger alliance for peace and shared prosperity;

Encouraging the new BRICS members to accede to the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Culture by BRICS member States signed on 9 July 2015;

We pledge to further strengthen our cooperation through the following:

1. Culture and Creative Economy, Copyright, and Artificial Intelligence

1.1 Recognise the growing economic weight of the cultural and creative sectors and industries and their contribution to the overall economy, by generating income, decent jobs, creative skills and driving innovation;

1.2 Agree to establish a BRICS platform on cultural and creative industries and creative economy within the BRICS Working Group on Culture; and encourage members, their respective cultural entities and financial institutions, as well as the New Development Bank (NDB) according to its mandate, among others, to look into the possibilities to support and foster the cultural and creative economies of BRICS member countries, developing cultural infrastructure, with a view to expand the dissemination of cultural content, fostering the exchange of artists and cultural practitioners, as well as promoting the development of joint projects, across a wide range of fields of the creative economy and cultural sector;

1.3 Foster cooperation in order to create a more harmonised, robust, and internationally comparable statistical architecture for the cultural and creative industries across BRICS States, by building on recognised global standards and indicators on measuring the creative economy;

1.4 Affirm the need for an ethical, safe, reliable, inclusive, trustworthy, development- oriented, equitable, transparent AI for good and for all, that is respectful of national legislation and the UN Charter, applicable international law, including sovereignty, human rights, and the empowerment of all women and girls, linguistic diversity, cultural heritage, protection of consumers and users, and of intellectual property rights;

1.5 Emphasise the necessity of exchanging experience among the BRICS States on remunerating or licensing the use of content protected by copyright and related rights in the mining, training and development of AI systems;

1.6 Affirm the need for a sustainable cultural ecosystem in the digital environment that effectively supports and fairly remunerates creators, artists, authors and other rightsholders, as well as upholds intellectual property rights, thus enabling an accessible, inclusive, and non-discriminatory digital environment, while also protecting artistic freedom and social and economic rights;

1.7 Favour multilingualism in the digital environment and reaffirm the need for the training datasets of all AI models, including those used in large language models to encompass, promote, protect and preserve linguistic and cultural diversity;

1.8 Promote the cooperation and sharing of expertise for safeguarding, promoting and preserving the documentary heritage within the libraries, archival repositories and higher education institutions among others.

2. Culture, Climate Change, and the Post-2030 Development Agenda

2.1 Affirm our commitment to supporting the inclusion of culture as a standalone goal in a future post-2030 Development Agenda, in line with the 2022 UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development (MONDIACULT);

2.2. Recognise the need to protect culture and cultural heritage from the adverse impacts of climate change, in line with the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience at the 28th UN Climate Change Conference (COP28); and look into the potential of the cultural sector for climate mobilization;

2.3 Take note of the efforts of the Group of Friends of Culture-Based Climate Action (GFCBCA) to enhance global cooperation in advocating for culture and cultural heritage to be taken into account in climate efforts;

2.4 Encourage cooperation among BRICS countries for actions aimed at: i) safeguarding and protecting cultural heritage from the impacts of climate-related risks by developing adaptive strategies for preserving cultural practices and heritage sites and by designing climate-resilient infrastructure, guided by traditional knowledge, Indigenous Peoples' knowledge, and local knowledge systems; (ii) supporting the cultural sector's role in encouraging sustainable practices, resilience, and climate-change-responsive behaviour across all levels of society;

2.5 Reaffirm the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities as a guiding principle of the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement and, with a view to preserve and safeguard cultural heritage, we urge developed countries to fulfil their commitments to provide and mobilise climate finance taking into account the needs and priorities of developing countries;

2.6 Call for strengthening the international legal protection of traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions and take note of the ongoing discussions at WIPO.

3. Return and Safeguarding of Cultural Property

3.1 Affirm the importance of the return of cultural property to their countries of origin as a path for promoting social cohesion, cultural and historical justice, reconciliation, and collective memory, as well as for strengthening intergenerational knowledge transmission, safeguarding historical continuity, and fostering deeper cooperation among states;

3.2 Endeavour to ensure everyone's right to freely participate in cultural life as well as to access culture and cultural heritage, especially that of its own community;

3.3 Acknowledge the importance of the return of cultural property to their countries of origin and its potential for rebuilding international relations in a non-hierarchical, cooperative basis, and we recognise the need for a more robust international framework on the matter;

3.4 Commit to strengthen cooperation in the subject of the return of cultural property by sharing experiences, national procedures, legislation and successful cases, by promoting heritage education and museum education, exchanging information among governmental instances and academic experts, as well as aligning priorities and policies in multilateral organisations with the aim of fostering progress in the field;

3.5 Welcome the decision of Brazil to support the organisation of a meeting of experts among BRICS countries in the field of return of cultural property, as a means to building the foundations for increased dialogue among academia, think tanks and civil society in the subject.

4. BRICS Festivals and Alliances

4.1 Welcome the decision of Brazil to host the BRICS Film Festival in the second semester, an event that will showcase BRICS countries' national productions, fostering dialogue, respect and understanding, while also enabling business and networking opportunities for the film sector;

4.2 Encourage the formulation of a calendar of international cultural and heritage events of the BRICS countries;

4.3 Encourage all BRICS States to join the existing BRICS Alliances, including the Alliance of Museums, the Alliance of Museums and Art Galleries, the Alliance of Libraries, the Alliance of Theatre for Children and Young People, the Alliance of Folk Dance, and the Alliance of Film Schools, through the signing of letters of intent by BRICS cultural institutions;

4.4. Consider using the Alliance of Museums and Alliance of Museums and Art Galleries, and the Alliance of Libraries to promote cooperation by developing virtual exhibitions that educate the BRICS members about their historical past and the significant progress they have made thus far in the recognition of social justice, freedom and fundamental human rights.

Sunil Kumar Tiwari

pibculture[at]gmail[dot]com

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