



People's BRICS – PUBLIC DIALOGUE FORUM

Global South Cooperation & Alternatives

21st - 22nd August - New Delhi



People's BRICS Delhi Declaration

As India hosts the BRICS Summit in 2026, we, the people of one of BRICS's founding countries, call on BRICS members to forge a development model based on solidarity, dignity, participatory democracy, and respect for human rights and the environment. The emergence of BRICS in 2009 signalled hope and much needed possibilities for South-South cooperation, and South led global governance that would reform international financial and economic institutions, processes and architecture to break the dominance of former colonial powers and the hegemony of the US dollar over the world's economy. Such South led global governance would ensure greater voice for developing countries in regional, international and multilateral fora that have been shaped by colonial histories and continuing inequalities, racism, religiocentrism, casteism and patriarchy.

In a Public Dialogue Forum in New Delhi on 21-22 August 2026 in the run-up to the BRICS Summit in September 2026, civil society organisations, trade unions, students, researchers, people's movements and other constituencies gathered to envision and voice what South-South cooperation and an alternative global order means for working peoples, rural and urban communities, and peoples' movements and organisations, rather than for capital, corporations, elites and geopolitical blocs.

We note that while BRICS continues to be viewed as a potential challenge to western economic and financial dominance, its potential and promise to break away from colonial mindsets and logic, and build an alternative world order remain unfulfilled. BRICS member countries continue to reproduce extractivist and inequitable development, and advance neoliberal trade and investment, corporate concentration, privatisation and financialisation, which have resulted in widespread destruction of eco-systems and livelihoods, violation of peoples' rights, and forced displacement of entire populations. Justice systems in BRICS countries remain weighted in favour of ruling regimes and their supporters, and laws and regulations are increasingly weaponised to suppress dialogue, dissent and democratic processes. National security, and social-economic stability continue to be used as justifications for the persecution of people and communities with heterodox views, and who dare to demand and defend their rights and dignity.

We emphasize that "South-South cooperation" be recognised not by the sovereignty it grants to states and capital, but by the freedom, security and dignity it delivers to working peoples, farmers, workers, women, Dalits, Adivasis, minorities and communities across the Global South. As a political formation, BRICS has remained shockingly silent on genocide, ethnic cleansing and western military aggression.



In the face of accelerating climate change, persisting hunger, increasing inequality and social-economic precarity, continuing wars and genocide, resurgence of fascist tendencies, subversion of democracy and breakdown of multilateralism, a progressive, just, pro-people and pro-environment vision and approach of South-South cooperation is timely and urgent. Drawn from discussions over two days, we present the following resolutions to BRICS member countries and BRICS as a whole, to adopt and implement.

Reduce and Eliminate Inequality within and between countries through concrete, time bound commitments. Widening inequality within and between countries of the Global South is a result of the current model of development. Economic growth built on wealth concentration for a few, and social-economic insecurity for the many is not a foundation for an alternative global order.

We demand:

- Progressive and redistributive taxation, including effective taxation of extreme wealth, high incomes, inheritance and corporate profits, alongside stronger international cooperation to curb tax avoidance, illicit financial flows and the use of tax havens.
- Redistributive policies that expand universal access to land, education, healthcare, housing, social protection and decent employment, while directly addressing structural inequalities faced by marginalised and historically disadvantaged communities.
- Effective regulation of finance capital and financial markets to curb speculation, excessive concentration and destabilising capital flows, and to ensure that finance serves productive investment, decent employment, public priorities and equitable development.
- Binding human rights, labour, environmental, legal and tax obligations for domestic and transnational corporations, with effective mechanisms for public accountability and remedy.

Stop Natural Resource Extractivism: Mining, resource extraction and large infrastructure development in the name of green development, technological advancement, energy self-sufficiency, environmental sustainability and ease of doing business are being financed and promoted as South-South development. Yet these projects reproduce familiar patterns of land dispossession, ecological destruction and corporate capital accumulation, with the costs borne disproportionately by marginalized people and the environment.

We demand:

- South–South cooperation that breaks decisively with extractive and unequal development models and approaches historically advanced by Western countries and associated international financial institutions.
- Recognition and support for livelihoods of people and communities dependent on natural resources such as fisheries, pastoralism, forest workers, adivasis and rural workers.
- BRICS-linked investment must guarantee the collective governance and management rights of resource-dependent communities over their land, forests, water, minerals and associated resources.

Promote food sovereignty and build resilient South–South food systems centred on small-scale producers, local control and ecological sustainability. The future of food systems in the Global South cannot be left to trade agreements, corporate agribusiness and volatile global supply chains. Small scale and peasant agriculture, fisheries and livestock raising feed most of the working peoples of the world, and sustain livelihoods, communities, local economies and ecological systems. But still, small-scale food producers and food workers increasingly face low incomes and wages, indebtedness, land, water and natural resource insecurity, climate shocks, rising input costs and growing corporate control over seeds, markets, storage, processing and agricultural data. South–South cooperation must strengthen food sovereignty, protect small scale producers and food system workers, and build resilience based on traditional and local-regional food systems, not on global commodity markets and agribusiness operations.

We demand:

- South–South trade, investment and agricultural cooperation that prioritises food sovereignty and the rights of small-scale producers, Indigenous Peoples, rural and food system workers and natural resource-dependent communities.

- Strengthen cooperation among BRICS competition authorities to curb monopoly power and corporate concentration in food and agriculture, including in seeds, fertilisers, agrochemicals, agricultural machinery and technologies, processing, storage, logistics, digital platforms and commodity trading.
- BRICS food and grain cooperation, including the BRICS Grain Exchange, should strengthen food security and intra-BRICS trade, harmonise fair trading standards and logistics, and reduce dependence on volatile external commodity markets without creating new forms of concentration or producer dependency.
- Recognise peasants and small-scale farmers as breeders and guarantee their rights to traditional/community seeds and seed sovereignty. Reject the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) in all BRICS countries.
- BRICS agricultural research and cooperation frameworks, including AGRIN, should protect indigenous genetic resources, traditional agricultural knowledge and community ownership, facilitate equitable sharing of research and genomic information, and reduce dependence on multinational agro-input corporations.
- Respect and assure the rights of small-scale farmers, fishers, livestock herders and natural resource-based communities to land, water, seeds, forests and other productive resources; to save, use, exchange, develop and sell seeds; to receive fair and remunerative prices; to organise collectively; and to participate meaningfully in decisions on agricultural, fisheries, water governance, eco-system and environmental management, trade and food policy.
- Digital agriculture cooperation must remain publicly accountable and farmer-centred, supporting agroecology, reduced water use and chemical inputs, and ecological resilience, while preventing corporate control over agricultural data and ensuring community rights over data and knowledge.
- BRICS agricultural cooperation should be supported by transparent and accountable public financing, including national funding, bilateral co-financing and appropriate development-bank support, with safeguards against corporate capture and indebtedness.
- South–South agricultural cooperation should develop fair pricing and payment mechanisms for agricultural commodities, reducing dependence on pricing systems and benchmarks dominated by institutions and markets of the Global North.
- Collective, BRICS-wide opposition and rejection of WTO-plus agricultural rules that further restrict the policy space of developing countries, and/or expand corporate rights over seeds, intellectual property, agricultural markets, investment and public food programmes.
- An Integrated Gene management practice needs to be developed, that encompass community gene management and national and BRICS level gene Banks.

Protecting and upholding the rights of workers across the Global South is critical. Informalisation, platformisation, automation and the rapid deployment of artificial intelligence are transforming the world of work across BRICS economies without a corresponding extension of rights, security or bargaining power. These changes are creating a new division of labour in which countries of the Global South continue to supply cheap, precarious and highly surveilled labour to corporations and markets headquartered elsewhere, including in the West, while workers absorb the costs of technological transition. South-South cooperation must strengthen labour rights instead of encouraging competition based on lower wages, weaker working conditions and reduced social protections.

We demand:

- The right to universal social security, pensions, healthcare, unemployment protection and income security across the life course for all workers, regardless of employment status; living wages; equal pay for equal work; freedom of association; and the right to organise and collectively bargain.
- Platform, gig, informal, migrant, domestic and contract workers must be recognised as workers with enforceable rights, not treated as outside the scope of labour law.
- Gains from Artificial Intelligence (AI), automation and digitalisation must be shared with workers, and workers must be protected by legal safeguards against displacement, deskilling, surveillance and casualisation.



Trade Agreements must serve equality, environmental sustainability and peoples' rights. Existing patterns of international trade and investment have produced deeply unequal outcomes between and within countries, locking many countries of the Global South into subordinate positions as exporters of raw materials, cheap labour and low-value goods while higher-value production, technology and profits remain concentrated elsewhere. South–South trade must be based on complementarity, solidarity and mutual development, rather than competition for markets, resources and investment. Free Trade Agreements, particularly North–South agreements, have often failed to deliver broad-based increases in trade or development, while reinforcing developing countries' dependence on developed-country markets, technology and capital. The WTO has similarly reflected deep asymmetries of power, with developed countries seeking to restrict the policy space available to developing countries in critical areas of development. South-South trade must learn from this experience and be rooted in complementarity, solidarity and mutual development, with employment, food sovereignty, access to health and structural transformation at its centre.

We demand:

- Trade policies that preserve the policy space of developing countries to industrialise, pursue full employment, achieve food sovereignty and self-sufficiency, protect strategic sectors, regulate capital and undertake structural transformation, while safeguarding public health, peoples' rights and the environment.
- South–South trade arrangements that promote complementarity and mutual development, strengthen workers, small-scale food producers, working class communities and local industries, and prevent the emergence of new centres of power and new peripheries within the Global South.
- Collective action by developing countries in international trade institutions to challenge unequal rules and defend common interests in areas including agriculture, food security, public health, public procurement and industrial policy.
- Trade agreements that protect access to essential goods and knowledge and do not impose patent or intellectual property obligations in critical sectors such as health, agriculture and fisheries, technology and industry.
- Trade and investment agreements that promote the technology transfer and sharing to build mutual well-being and employment opportunities across the South.

Building a people-centred South-South climate architecture that advances just transitions, expands climate finance and gives communities greater control over climate action. Current development models allow advanced industrialised countries to sustain disproportionately high levels of production, consumption and resource use, while shifting the ecological, social and transition burdens onto developing countries and communities that have contributed least to the climate crisis. Climate change action must be rooted in historical responsibility, equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, while ensuring that the transition itself does not reproduce new forms of extraction, dispossession or inequality.

We demand:

- A BRICS intergovernmental mechanism on climate change action and just transitions to deepen South–South cooperation, with institutionalised and transparent channels for participation by civil society, social movements, affected communities and citizen initiatives in shaping policies and programmes.
- A substantial increase in BRICS and South–South climate finance beyond current levels, including the creation of a dedicated multilateral climate and just transition fund. BRICS should explore progressive financing mechanisms, including levies on fossil fuels and highly carbon-intensive products and services, while ensuring that costs are not shifted onto low-income people and households.
- A major increase in adaptation finance, with the aim of directing around half of climate finance towards adaptation, alongside simplified and direct-access financing mechanisms for local governments, communities and community-led initiatives.
- Democratic, publicly accountable and community-led just energy transitions that expand universal access to clean and affordable energy while protecting livelihoods, ecosystems, labour rights, indigenous and community rights, and ensuring meaningful participation in transition planning.

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- Democratising existing BRICS and Global South development finance institutions, including the New Development Bank, with stronger public accountability, social and environmental safeguards, and significantly greater financing for climate action, particularly adaptation and locally led just transitions.
 - Greater South–South cooperation on clean technologies, knowledge and public capabilities, including technology transfer, joint research, public-sector cooperation and sharing of climate-resilient technologies without restrictive intellectual property barriers.

The Global South must build alternative financial architectures that reduce debt dependence, challenge dollar dominance and strengthen financial sovereignty. Multilateral and private debt continue to constrain the development priorities of countries across the Global South, with debt servicing absorbing a significant share of public expenditure, and limiting resources available for health, education, social protection and other essential public services. At the same time, dollar dominance extends beyond trade and national reserves into the infrastructure of global finance, including correspondent banking and international payment systems largely controlled from the Global North. Systems such as SWIFT have also been used in the enforcement of geopolitical sanctions.

De-dollarisation and new development finance institutions are important and needed to challenge the existing international financial order. But changing the currency of settlement or the institutional location of finance does not, by itself, create a democratic or developmental alternative. Alternatives in the Global South must work towards promoting and increasing non-dollar bilateral trade.

We demand:

- Timely and comprehensive debt restructuring, an end to austerity-driven conditionalities, and transparent, democratic and fair mechanisms for sovereign debt resolution.
- Development finance that serves public purpose without making privatisation, fiscal compression, deregulation and/or market-oriented restructuring conditionalities for access to finance.
- Greater use of local currencies and non-dollar bilateral and intra-BRICS trade, supported by payment and settlement arrangements that strengthen monetary sovereignty without creating new hierarchies or dependencies within the Global South.
- A New Development Bank that does not reproduce the harmful practices of Western-dominated international financial institutions, and is instead transparent, democratically accountable, socially and environmentally responsible, and responsive to the needs of affected communities.
- Cooperation among BRICS central banks on interoperable payment systems and Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDC), including exploration of mechanisms for linking national CBDC systems where these strengthen financial sovereignty, reduce transaction costs and remain subject to strong public and democratic oversight.
- Development of independent South–South financial transaction infrastructure, including exploration of secure distributed-ledger and other public digital payment technologies that can reduce dependence on financial infrastructure controlled by the Global North.

Women-led Development must advance equality, autonomy, and political power and participation.

Women's labour and leadership are being instrumentalised as a branding exercise for corporate and elite-friendly development frameworks that leave structural gender inequalities, discrimination and exclusion intact. Women-led development must mean women having real power in political institutions, public policy and economic decision-making, not simply being included as beneficiaries, workers or entrepreneurs within existing unequal systems.

We demand:

- South-South cooperation must expand women's and gender-diverse participation in formal, secure and protected employment, guarantee equal pay and labour rights.
- Recognition and redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work, through stronger public services, social infrastructure and measures that reduce the disproportionate burden borne by women.
- Greater economic and social autonomy for women and gender-diverse people through access to land, assets, credit, and public services.

- A feminist and intersectional approach to development that addresses inequalities, discrimination and exclusions across caste, class, race, ethnicity, religion, disability and other forms of marginalisation.
- Meaningful political representation and decision-making power for women at every level, including in governments, public institutions, workplaces and South–South cooperation frameworks.
- Stronger legal protections against gender-based violence, including honour crimes, marital rape and ‘corrective rape’, and opposition to the dilution or weakening of laws intended to protect women from violence and discrimination.
- Full recognition and protection of gender-diverse and transgender rights through laws and policies shaped in consultation with gender-diverse and transgender communities.
- Gender-responsive budgeting that ensures adequate allocations for women and marginalised gender groups, with transparent monitoring of both allocation and actual expenditure.

Technology and digital governance must strengthen democratic rights, inclusion, privacy and public accountability. The expansion of digital infrastructure and data-driven governance across the Global South, including through South-South technology partnerships, is enabling new forms of surveillance, profiling and social control that are shrinking democratic space and deepening existing inequalities. Technology cannot be treated as neutral infrastructure when it increasingly determines who is recognised by the state, who can access welfare and work, and who is excluded from citizenship and public services.

We demand:

- Strong safeguards against digital surveillance and profiling, including transparency, independent oversight and legal protections for privacy, expression, association and other democratic rights.
- Universal access to welfare regardless of digital access or authentication, with offline and human alternatives, and no denial of entitlements due to technological failure, data errors or lack of digital literacy.
- Protection of citizenship, and civil-political rights from digital exclusion and digitally induced discrimination, ensuring that documentary gaps, database mismatches or authentication failures cannot be used to deny citizenship, voting rights or due process.
- Rights-based and inclusive technology governance that addresses inequalities of caste, class, race, gender, disability, geography, language and access to technology.
- Accountable South–South technology cooperation, ensuring that digital public infrastructure and governance technologies are not used to export surveillance, centralised identification, data extraction or exclusion without equivalent democratic safeguards. The deployment of technology should be preceded by public consultation, pilots and trials. Technology and technology makers must be held accountable for digital exclusions.
- Transparency and accountability of governments, and privacy and protection for individuals. Government databases and Management Information Systems should proactively disclose sufficiently granular public information wherever necessary to enable scrutiny of government programmes. Technology policy must be properly debated and deliberated through representative institutions of accountability like Parliament, which must also exercise regular oversight over proper implementation and course correction wherever required.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the data economy must serve public interest, workers’ rights, technological sovereignty and ecological justice. Artificial intelligence and the global data economy are being built on the extraction of labour, data, water, energy, minerals and computational resources from the Global South, while ownership and control remain concentrated in the hands of a small number of powerful corporations. The social and ecological costs of this model are increasingly borne by workers and communities with the least power to shape how these technologies are designed, deployed or governed.

We demand:

- An end to digital extractivism, where the Global South supplies cheap labour, data, minerals, land, water and energy while technological ownership, intellectual property and profits remain concentrated elsewhere. Binding ecological safeguards for digital infrastructure
- Equitable South–South cooperation on AI that prioritises technology sharing, open knowledge, public research, local technological capabilities and fair access to computing infrastructure.

- Democratic and public-interest governance of data and digital infrastructure, treating data and AI systems as public policy concerns and not corporate assets.
- Strong labour and social protections in the AI economy, including rights for data workers, platform workers and others whose labour underpins AI systems, and safeguards against displacement, deskilling, surveillance and precarious work.
- Participation of workers and local communities in decisions around the use of their environment, while enforcing existing land rights protections.

Health cooperation must strengthen universal public healthcare, equitable access and the right to health. In India, growing dependence on private healthcare, shortages of health workers, weak last-mile public infrastructure and high out-of-pocket costs continue to undermine the right to affordable and universal healthcare. South–South cooperation must strengthen public health systems and not reproduce market-led models of care.

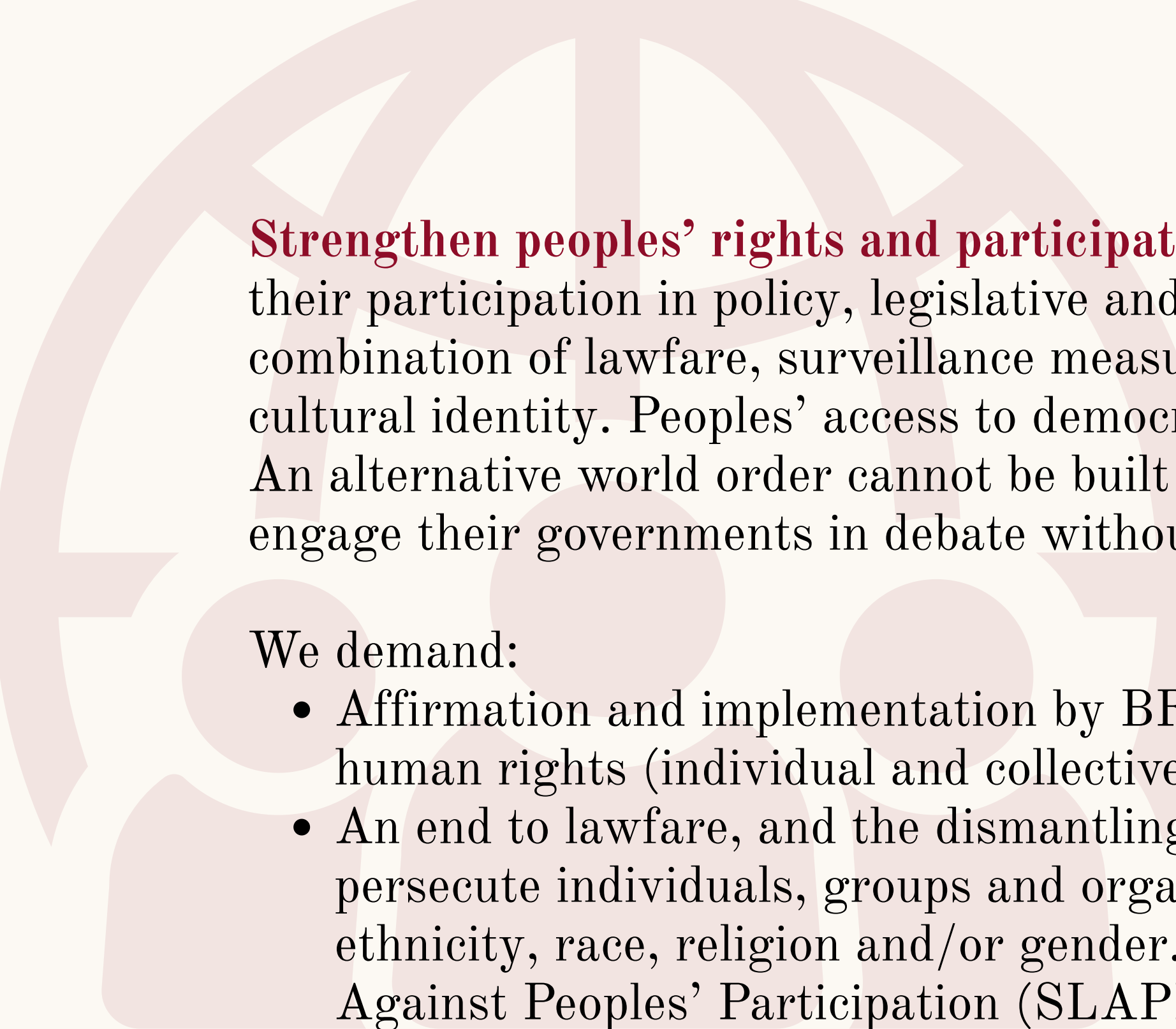
We demand:

- Universal, publicly funded and publicly provided affordable/free healthcare, with major investment in primary care, rural and last-mile health infrastructure, and an adequately staffed public health workforce. These in turn demand an increase of public health budgets to 5% of GDP.
- Effective regulation of costs, fees, quality of care and practices in the private healthcare sector, and curbing of indiscriminate expansion of corporate healthcare.
- Ensuring of rights related to employment, wages and working conditions for all categories of frontline doctors, nurses and health workers
- Equitable South–South health cooperation focused on sharing technology, research, medicines, vaccines and public-health capacity, rather than expanding corporate markets or dependence on private providers. Central in such cooperation is equitable access to drugs, diagnostics and medical technologies utilising the WTO TRIPS flexibilities including compulsory licensing, especially with regard to life saving medicines and treatments.
- As a principle, BRICS countries should guarantee that vaccines, tests and medicines are treated as shared public goods freely available to everyone who needs them, made through public and regional manufacturing, and built on strong publicly-funded health systems for all.
- Health cooperation centred on the right to health, with particular focus on rural communities, workers, women, marginalised groups and others systematically excluded from quality healthcare.

Peace and security must be rooted in justice, human dignity, sovereignty and freedom from war, occupation and coercion. Growing geopolitical rivalry, militarisation, unilateral interventions and the weaponisation of trade, finance, sanctions and technology are placing some of the most vulnerable countries and communities of the Global South at greatest risk. BRICS cannot claim to advance a more just and multipolar world while remaining silent when powerful states use military or economic coercion to undermine sovereignty, deepen conflict or impose disproportionate costs on weaker nations. Security must be understood in human terms, centred on peace, dignity, livelihoods and democratic sovereignty.

We demand:

- BRICS recognise and collectively oppose genocide, ethnic cleansing, unlawful occupation, collective punishment and military intervention, and uphold international human rights and humanitarian law and the protection of civilian populations.
- A shift away from militarisation and escalating arms expenditure towards social and developmental priorities.
- Opposition to the weaponisation of finance, trade, sanctions and technology, especially where such measures undermine civilian welfare, development and the policy autonomy of developing countries.
- A stronger role for BRICS in advancing diplomacy, mediation and multilateral solutions.
- A people-centred understanding of security that prioritises justice, and freedom from war, hunger, displacement, ecological devastation and economic insecurity.



Strengthen peoples' rights and participatory democracy. Peoples' rights (individual and collective) and their participation in policy, legislative and critical decision-making processes are under assault through a combination of lawfare, surveillance measures, repressive regulations, and denial of citizenship and social-cultural identity. Peoples' access to democratic spaces and timely, effective justice is shrinking alarmingly. An alternative world order cannot be built without robust participatory democracy where people can engage their governments in debate without fear.

We demand:

- Affirmation and implementation by BRICS members of their obligations to respect, protect and fulfil human rights (individual and collective) as mandated under international human rights law.
- An end to lawfare, and the dismantling of laws and regulations that enable state and private actors to persecute individuals, groups and organisations because of their political views and expression, culture, ethnicity, race, religion and/or gender. Of particular importance here are stopping Strategic Lawsuits Against Peoples' Participation (SLAPP) and arbitrary incarceration.
- Guarantees of freedom of expression, association and the rights of people to engage in peaceful public gatherings, demonstrations, marches and engagements with law and policy makers, without the threat of state violence and persecution.
- Freedom of press and media
- Democratic, public scrutiny of laws and regulations that affect civil, political, social, economic and environmental rights, public participation, through peoples' councils and local, sub-national and national levels. Such reviews must lead to necessary changes in laws and regulations that restrict, suppress or violate peoples' rights in any form or manner.
- Justice systems that deliver timely and effective judicial remedies especially to vulnerable and marginalised peoples and groups, and which protect/guard peoples' rights from violations by state and private entities, and remain free and independent executive/Government control.

We resolve to carry the demands of this Forum to the BRICS Summit process in India in 2026 and beyond, and to continue building a people-centred movement for genuine South-South solidarity long after the Summit concludes.

Working Groups on International Financial Institutions

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