

Declaration of the 11th BRICS Trade Union Forum

(Final Draft)

Preamble

1. National trade union organizations of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China, and the Republic of South Africa jointly established the BRICS Trade Union Forum (BRICS TUF). During China's presidency of the BRICS countries in 2022, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) hosted the 11th BRICS Trade Union Forum. The Forum, themed on "Deepening Partnership for a Better Future", held its plenary meeting virtually on July 13th, 2022.
2. Our world is facing a pandemic and drastic changes both unseen in a century. Economic globalization is experiencing headwinds, and the world is entering a period of volatility and transformation. All countries have been severely impacted, which is especially true for the emerging markets and developing ones. The world of work faces unprecedented challenges. The International Labour Organization(ILO) predicted that in 2022, the global unemployment population reaches 207 million, and the global working-hour deficit is equivalent to 52 million full-time jobs. The labour and business incomes decrease, many micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) struggle, underemployment and informal employment increase, poverty grows, and inequality in gender, economy and society widens.
3. Guided by the BRICS spirit of openness, inclusiveness, and win-win cooperation, and upholding the theme of our times of peace and development, we, the representatives of workers from the BRICS countries, focus our efforts on skills upgrading and safeguarding workers' right to development, aiming at exploring a common solution for developing a high-quality partnership among the BRICS trade unions and for creating a better future of work.

Adapting to industrial transformation and enhancing workers' skills

4. The start of the 21st century marks the unprecedentedly fast development of global technological innovations. Information technology, new energy, new materials, and biotechnology are gaining momentum and deeply intertwined. Any economy that cannot keep up with the global industrial upgrading would be abandoned by the market, thus leading to shrinkage and decline of its industries. In the meantime, rapid transformations in the world of work, such as those resulting from the challenges of climate change, exacerbate skills mismatches and skills shortages, requiring people of all ages to reskill and upskill continuously in order to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work. All countries, developing ones in particular, should increase investment in skills

training of their workers. Vocational training programs should be closely integrated with the national economic and livelihood plans as well as employment promotion policies. The governments, employers and trade unions should strengthen social dialogue in this respect.

5. To adapt to the new round of scientific and technological revolution as well as the changes and challenges in the world of work, we urge the governments in the BRICS countries to reform vocational and educational training systems, expand the scale of vocational training colleges step by step, align vocational training with industrial needs and promote cooperation among universities, colleges and enterprises; rapidly respond to the drastically changing skills demand, establish a public service system of digital education resources, and build online platforms for life-long learning. The governments, employers and trade unions should conduct social dialogue in this respect.
6. The International Labour Conference 2022 (2022ILC) had its first discussion on the formulation of a new International Labour Standard (ILS) regarding quality apprenticeship and protection of apprentices. We underline the relevance of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998), as amended in 2022, the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008), as amended in 2022, and the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, 2019, for the promotion of quality apprenticeships and the effective protection of all apprentices. Meanwhile, we stress that BRICS members should take measures in accordance with national laws to promote equality, diversity and social inclusion in apprenticeships. Special attention should be given to persons in vulnerable situations or disadvantaged groups and their legitimate rights and interests should be guaranteed.
7. We urge enterprises to pay close attention to industrial frontier knowledge and technology advances, reinforce enterprises' role in occupational skill training, explore an interactive mechanism to match skill upgrading with payment increase, optimize skill ranking assessment standards and skill cultivating system, and actively respond to the training needs of workers and trade unions.
8. Trade unions should adapt to the requirements of global scientific, technological and industrial revolutions, step up efforts to motivate workers to concentrate on new trends of technology development, organize workers to carry out various forms of labour and skill competitions, and make these competitions important platforms for workers' innovation and creation. Efforts shall be made to establish innovation studios for model workers and craftsmen, so as to provide new space for information exchange and experience-sharing among model workers, craft men, technicians, experts and scholars. Governments and companies must create conditions and provide necessary support for workers and unions in this respect.

Safeguarding workers' right to development and increasing workers' well-being

9. The full realization of human rights is one of the great dreams of all humanity. The BRICS countries pursue a people-centered view of human rights, integrate the universality of human rights with national conditions, regard the rights to subsistence and development as primary human rights, safeguard social fairness and justice, and promote all-rounded development of the people. Trade unions in BRICS countries should respect and secure workers' right to development and guarantee workers' access to universal, fair and genuine human rights.
10. Employment promotion shall always be strategically prioritized. Trade unions should make efforts to explore new models and channels to provide workers with employment services, advance income distribution system reform and strengthen participation in the minimum wage standard-setting; to carry out efficient and effective collective bargaining at the levels of industrial and local trade unions and strengthen the training of collective bargaining trainers. Trade unions should involve in formulating national occupational safety and health policies, and actively conduct awareness-raising and public knowledge campaigns; strengthen liaisons with relevant government departments and social partners such as entrepreneurs' associations and build tripartite joint meeting mechanisms for industrial relations.
11. Social security is the fundamental institutional guarantee to safeguard and improve people's livelihood, uphold social equity and enhance overall well-being of the people. The coverage of basic social insurance schemes, such as endowment insurance, medical insurance, unemployment insurance and occupational injury insurance, should be further extended. We welcome the decision of the ILC2022 to include safe and healthy working environment in the ILO's framework of fundamental principles and rights at work, as well as the resolution concerning decent work and the social and solidarity economy. Continuous attention should be paid to workers in difficulty and a comprehensive social assistance system should be established in order to ensure workers in informal and precarious employment enjoy full social protection .
12. We notice that entering the 21st century, new forms and models of business keep emerging due to technological evolution, demographic change, labour market supervision, macroeconomic fluctuations, etc. We call on the governments to better protect workers in new forms of employment through laws and systems, and promote relevant industries to improve industrial standards and strengthen self-regulation. Trade unions should spare no effort in organizing workers in new forms of employment by innovating ways according to the forms of employment and specific demands of the workers to protect their rights and interests.
13. We call on the international labour community to pay close attention to the right to development of emerging markets and developing countries. We resolutely oppose any country or organization to promote its biased, unfair and unjustified values, ideology, political standards and development model in the name of human rights, or use human rights as a pretext to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, especially the labour affairs of developing ones.

14. We express our concern about the climate change crisis and the global food security crisis. We believe that the BRICS countries should lead the process of debates and actions to secure sustainable development, environmental balance and food security for all people in the world.

Conclusion

15. The BRICS mechanism is of significant importance for deepening collaboration among emerging markets and developing countries, promoting post-pandemic global economic recovery, and creating a favorable environment for shared development. We should strive to translate the BRICS spirit of openness, inclusiveness, and win-win cooperation into concrete actions, adhere to the principle of independence, self-determination, objectiveness, and impartiality, promote peaceful development, uphold fairness and justice, and advocate democracy and freedom, in order to inject more BRICS dynamism into global development.
16. Ten years have passed since the BRICS TUF was initiated, and we take pride in the journey we have traveled. The Forum represents the voice of the BRICS workers, strengthens cooperation amongst the labour circles of the BRICS countries, and contributes to the BRICS mechanism and other major multi-lateral mechanisms. We believe that the BRICS plus cooperation model will further enrich the content of the BRICS cooperation and expand the BRICS global partnership network. We shall closely follow the new developments of our times, support the BRICS Plus cooperation model, build more extensive partnership, safeguard common interests and promote shared development, so as to build a better future of solidarity and cooperation among trade unions from emerging markets and developing countries.