

Statement by the Vice President of the National Confederation of Industry of Brazil on behalf of the BRIC + IBSA Business Forum
Rio de Janeiro, 14 April 2010

Unofficial translation

Your Excellencies,

Yesterday, in Rio de Janeiro, business representatives from the IBSA and BRIC member countries held meetings under four subject panels - energy, information technology, infrastructure and agribusiness - in order to discuss these issues and identify trade and investment opportunities between our countries.

Our discussions produced general and specific messages.

Allow me to report our general messages:

1. BRIC and IBSA are not just acronyms. They are spheres of political and entrepreneurial coordination, in which we have identified several business opportunities, economic complementarities and areas of cooperation;
2. The flow of trade and investment in the BRIC and IBSA countries is undergoing an intense process of transformation. The countries that make up both groups are now global investors. Foreign direct investment will underpin the strengthening of alliances;
3. Our economies have overcome the global crisis and have become a source of stability to the global economy;
4. Our countries have a role in finding global solutions in the contexts of WTO rules, reform of the financial system and energy and food security.

Our specific messages in regard to each of the topics discussed yesterday are:

Energy

The main focus of the discussions on energy was the need for investment and renewal of the energy sources of our countries. Having that in mind, we believe it is urgent:

- to facilitate alternative mechanisms for cooperation between our countries aimed at technology and knowledge transfer, exchange of industrial processes and development of sustainable practises and;
- to promote sustainable solutions such as biofuels, and joint initiatives aimed at technological innovation in the field of energy.

Information Technology

This area comprises numerous fields of activity such as E-Government, connectivity, education and training of human resources, development of innovation projects and technology transfer.

All five countries are subject to the problem of production scale and need to implement advanced technological support to keep up with and boost business competitiveness.

Infrastructure

The five governments must seek the improvement of internal regulation and the creation of investment-friendly environments to encourage the private sector to invest in roads, railways, ports, sanitation, water supply, energy sources, among others.

Agribusiness

Plans to fully liberalise the primary sector have been gradually replaced by the more realistic goal of minimising veiled barriers, especially technical-sanitary barriers, quotas, special licenses, safeguards, subsidies and import licenses.

It is imperative that agribusiness grows while incorporating technological innovations as well as the leading-edge agenda for social and environmental sustainability.

Your Excellencies,

After yesterday's activities, we are certain that Brazil, South Africa, China, India and Russia will play an increasingly important part in any coming scenario.

Although the BRICS + IBSA countries stand out by the strengthening of their partnerships in the economic and financial fields, they still need to engage in a corresponding shift in the political-strategic domain that properly reflects the prominence and importance the five countries have achieved.

I conclude by reaffirming my satisfaction with being the spokesman of the private sectors of the five nations meeting this week, and renew my hopes that we may move towards a new phase of dialogue and concrete initiatives.