



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **REPORT TO THE PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (PGIR) ON THE WORK OF PARLIAMENT ON BRICS-PARLIAMENTARY FORUM**

**15 MARCH 2024**

The following is reported for noting by the PGIR, that:

1. During its chairpersonship of the BRICS cooperation mechanism in 2023, the South African government hosted a successful XV (15<sup>th</sup>) BRICS Summit from 22nd to 24th August in Sandton, South Africa, under the theme “BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism;”
2. Correspondingly, based on the governance principle of chairmanship rotation, the South African Parliament also assumed the 2023 chairpersonship of the BRICS Parliamentary Forum (PF) and successfully hosted the 9th BRICS PF meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 27th to 28th September 2023 under the theme: “Harnessing Inclusive Multilateralism and Parliamentary Diplomacy to Deepen BRICS and Africa Partnership for Accelerated Implementation of the Africa Free-Trade Agreement;”
3. The outcomes of both BRICS conferences are articulated in the XV BRICS Summit Johannesburg II Declaration and the 9th BRICS PF Declaration.
4. The resolutions agreed upon at the XV BRICS Summit encompassed five thematic areas of BRICS and Africa partnership, namely: a) developing a partnership towards an equitable Just Transition; b) transforming education and skills development for the future; c) unlocking opportunities through the African

Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA); d) strengthening post-pandemic socio-economic recovery and advancing progress toward the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and' e) strengthening multilateralism, including the efforts towards substantial reforms of global governance institutions and enhancing the meaningful participation of women in peace processes;

5. During the XV BRICS Summit, BRICS Member states reaffirmed their commitment to promoting inclusive multilateralism and upholding international law in a world where sovereign states cooperate to maintain peace and security, advance sustainable development, ensure the promotion and protection of democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, and promote cooperation based on the spirit of solidarity, mutual respect, justice and equality.
6. During the XV BRICS Summit The BRICS Heads of State's further reiterated continued support of the African Union's (AU) Agenda 2063 and Africa's efforts towards integration, including the effective implementation of the AfCFTA;
7. The XV BRICS Summit further acknowledged that the AfCFTA is set to create a predictable environment for investments, particularly in infrastructure development, and to provide opportunities for synergies with partners for cooperation, trade and development on the African continent. It also recognized the immense potential that the AfCFTA represents for the integration and development aspirations of the SADC region, as envisioned in the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP 2020-2030) and SADC Vision 2050;
8. On the other hand, the 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS-PF meeting demonstrated the resolve and ongoing efforts by the members of the BRICS PF to strengthen BRICS parliamentary exchanges and inter-parliamentary dialogue to deepen parliamentary diplomacy, as emphasized in the Johannesburg Declaration of the 10th BRICS Summit, held in South Africa from 25th to 27th July 2018.
9. Equally important to note with regards to the 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS-PF is the commendable initiative taken by the South African Parliament to extend invitations to various delegations representing the parliamentary community in Africa, including regional parliamentary assemblies and national parliaments of the SADC, to participate in the 9th BRICS PF.

10. Most notably, during the 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS PF meeting the South African Parliament played a commendable leadership role in leading negotiations that culminated to the final signing and adoption of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the BRICS Parliamentary Forum, marking the first step towards the institutionalization of the parliamentary dimension within the BRICS cooperation mechanism.
11. The Signing of the MoU and the 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS-PF Joint Declaration Statement were one of the key highlights of South Africa's chairmanship of the 2003 BRICS PF and would go to the annals of history as one of the key milestones and legacy of the 6<sup>th</sup> democratic parliament.
12. Relatedly, another critical envisaged outcome of the 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS-PF was an agreement on the establishment of a fully-fledged BRICS-PF Secretariat in order to give an impetus to the strategic imperative of institutionalizing the parliamentary dimension of the BRICS cooperation mechanism. However, there was no agreement on the establishment of the Secretariat during the 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS PF meeting and it was agreed that the matter should be deferred for consideration to future BRICS-PF meetings. Therefore, it is recommended that a follow-up on the issue of the establishment of the BRICS PF Secretariat should be made during the 7<sup>th</sup> Parliament.
13. Through its various parliamentary diplomacy instruments, the 7<sup>th</sup> Parliament should follow up and continue to lobby other BRICS parliaments to have the issue of the BRICS PF Secretariat riding high above any other consideration and/or issues on the agenda of Russia's 2024 Chairmanship of the 10<sup>th</sup> BRICS PF.