

**SOUTH AFRICA & EMERGING POWER ALLIANCES:
IBSA, BRIC, BASIC**

**Hosted by
Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD) / Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES)**

**Burgers Park Hotel
Pretoria/Tshwane**

Date: 5 November 2010

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Concept Note

The purpose of this one-day workshop will be to contribute to an ongoing assessment of South Africa's engagement in the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Trilateral Dialogue Forum while relating to the emergence of the BRIC quartet of Brazil-Russia-India-China and its membership in BASIC – Brazil-South Africa-India-China – within the framework of ongoing climate change talks. While the focus of this exercise will be on sorting out South Africa's dilemmas and exploring its options relating to IBSA-BRIC-BASIC, it also aims to glean Indian and Brazilian perspectives relating to these formations as well and to solicit views on the future of IBSA, BRIC and BASIC, their comparative advantages and limitations.

The workshop follows in the wake of what has been an economic diplomatic offensive by President Jacob Zuma in state visits to the BRIC countries, accompanied by ministerial and business delegations. Ostensibly aimed at gaining South Africa's inclusion into the BRIC forum, these visits are also intended to strengthen South Africa's bilateral relations with each of the four countries. Indeed, Sino-South African relations have been elevated to 'comprehensive strategic partnership,' amplifying the importance of the bilateral relationship between South Africa, India and Brazil within the IBSA trilateral relationship. Politically, all four countries appear to favour South Africa's accession to BRIC whether or not South Africa's economic indicators and demographic profile are in alignment with this grouping.

The background to this workshop is the debate generated in South Africa by its initial exclusion from the launching of the BRIC summitry process in 2009 amid perceptions that the emergence of BRIC as a big power 'club' of the world's leading emerging economies might signal the marginalisation and fading of IBSA. With BRIC having become something more than a Goldman Sachs acronym in the international relations of emerging power politics, the question of whether or not South Africa should pursue its inclusion in BRIC or focus on the development of IBSA with its more clearly South-South cooperation and developmental agenda has generated sustained debate. IBSA, however, appears to have sustained its momentum in spite of BRIC as reflected in the second IBSAMAR naval exercise that took place over two weeks in South Africa in September. Additionally, the coming into being of the BASIC grouping at the Copenhagen climate talks, which includes South Africa (but excludes Russia), bring yet another dimension to this discussion. Moreover, it highlighted a broader phenomenon of emerging power coalition-building including other large developing countries and those on the periphery of the West such as Turkey, the G15 in which the Brazil-Turkish nuclear swap deal involving Iran emerged as well as the broader G20, taking over from the G8 and including such countries as Mexico and Indonesia.

From a conceptual standpoint, what do these new groupings, variously referred to as 'club governance' or the emergence of 'ad-hoc coalitions' and 'strategic triangle' tell us about the changing contours of an increasingly multipolar global environment and the role of the IBSA countries within this new international relations dynamic? And what are the foreign policy and economic diplomacy implications for each country as they grapple with their respective domestic developmental and security challenges?

Finally, this workshop aims to enlist South African government and non-government perspectives alike as well as Indian and Brazilian perspectives. *With IBSA's ten year anniversary looming in 2013*, this workshop is seen as the beginning of a build up to reviewing where this trilateral partnership has taken South-South cooperation in the past decade. As such, it is hoped that it will stimulate a continuing programme of exploring and interrogating the emerging power and global South terrain more generally, South Africa's niche within it, and where such formations as IBSA in particular, can contribute to the fleshing out of a more balanced North-South global governance architecture as there is not only an ongoing power-shift from west-to-east, but a growing concentration of economic interaction and geopolitical positioning in the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans. The extent to which emerging power alliances can contribute to security community-building within these vast interregional realms will have an important bearing on future global economic growth and stability.

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME (Draft)

MORNING SESSION

09h30

Welcoming remarks

Siphamandla Zondi, Executive Director, IGD

Axel Schmidt, Country Director: FES

Overview of Workshop

Francis Kornegay, Associate, Emerging Powers, IGD

Chair

Siphamandla Zondi, IGD

10h00

Emerging Power Alliances in Perspective: IBSA, BRIC, BASIC

Perspective: India

Ummu Salma Bava,

Chair & Prof. Centre of European Studies,

Jawaharlal Nehru University

Perspective: Brazil

Alcides Costa Vaz, Vice-Director,

Institute of International Relations, University of Brasilia

Perspective: South Africa

Francis Kornegay, IGD

Discussant

Mzukisi Qobo, Programme Director, Emerging Powers,

SA Institute of International Affairs

11h30

Coffee/Tea

11h45

Discussion

13h00

Lunch

AFTERNOON SESSION

14h00

Chair

Joe-Ansie Van Wyk, UNISA

The SA's IBSA-BRIC Dilemma: BRIC or No-BRIC?

Amb Sis Ngombane, Deputy Director General,

Asia and the Middle East, DIRCO (TBC)

Economic & Trade Implications of IBSA-BRIC Dilemma
Xavier Carim, Deputy Director General,
International Trade & Economic Development, DTI (TBC)

Is There an IBSA-BRIC Business Future?
Simon Freemantle, *Standard Bank, Economist – East Africa*

Discussant I:
Political/Foreign Policy implications
Garth le Pere, *Independent Analyst*

Discussant II: Economic/Trade implications
Brendan Vickers, *IGD Associate/Chief Director,*
Research & Policy, International Trade & Econ. Devpt. DTI

15h15
15h30 – 17h30

Coffee/Tea
Discussion/Roundtable

17h30

This concluding session will bring in everyone who has presented to reflect on forgoing presentations and discussions.
Conclusion & Vote of Thanks