



higher education & training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Press Release

A Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Education

The South African Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr B Nzimande hosted the first meeting of the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) Ministers of Education on 05 November 2013, in Paris, France, on the margins of the 37th session of the UNESCO General Conference. The meeting was convened by South Africa as the current Chair of the BRICS grouping. The Minister was supported at this meeting by the Minister of Basic Education, Ms Angie Motshekga and senior officials from both Departments of Basic Education, and Higher Education and Training.

The meeting provided a platform for BRICS Education Ministers to explore areas of collaboration in the fields of education and training between their countries. The meeting also discussed potential areas of cooperation between BRICS and UNESCO in line with the resolution of the 2011 Sanya Summit, held in China. The BRICS Education Ministers meeting sought to underscore the strategic importance of cooperation in education between the BRICS countries, and the need to highlight this at the next BRICS Summit.

Issues such as strengthening collaboration between BRICS universities, partnerships and knowledge exchanges on Technical Vocational Education and Training, portability and transferability of qualifications between BRICS countries were highlighted as important for the cooperation.

Moreover, the Ministers underscored the importance of collaboration with UNESCO in order to accelerate progress towards the achievements of the Education for All (EFA) goals, and also shape discussions on the post 2015 agenda. It was further agreed that Technical Vocational Education and Training should feature strongly on the post 2015 EFA goals.

A meeting with the UNESCO Director General, Ms Irina Bokova took place on 06 November 2013 and agreed that BRICS and UNESCO should work together to assist the least developed

countries towards the attainment of global education targets. Amongst issues which were highlighted for cooperation are, the strengthening of data collection systems within BRICS, cooperation and sharing of best practices on Technical Vocational Education and Training. It was further proposed that BRICS and UNESCO should investigate how ICT can be used effectively to improve the quality of learning outcomes.

The BRICS Ministers agreed on the need to establish a mechanism at the highest political and technical level in order to coordinate and implement the identified areas of cooperation which will be coordinated by South Africa as the current Chair of BRICS. The Ministers also agreed that the second meeting of BRICS Education Ministers will be held at the next BRICS Summit of heads of state in 2014.

For further information contact Mr Ghaleeb Jeppie, Cell: +27 828544379.