



## **Joint Statement by BRICS Deputy Foreign Ministers and Special Envoys on the Middle East and North Africa**

***Brasília, Brazil, March 28, 2025***

1. BRICS Deputy Foreign Ministers and Special Envoys on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) met on March 28, 2025, in Brasília, Brazil, to exchange views on the current situation in the region.
2. They reiterated their serious concern over continued conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa, especially the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which threaten regional stability and have a negative impact on international peace and security. They reiterated the need to ensure peaceful resolution of disputes and agreed that conflicts should be solved exclusively through peaceful means, including political and diplomatic means, on the basis of full respect for international law, including the UN Charter, and international humanitarian law.
3. They reasserted the primary role of the UN Security Council (UNSC) in maintaining international peace and security, in regular interaction with the General Assembly. They acknowledged the important role played by regional organizations in addressing threats to international peace and security in accordance with Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. They advocated for the strengthening of multilateralism as a means to promoting and ensuring peace, stability, and development in the MENA region.
4. They stressed that peace and stability in the MENA region require developmental cooperation and integration. They reiterated the need to address the root causes of regional tensions, including foreign intervention and occupation, especially the Israeli illegal occupation on Palestine. They emphasized the importance of contributing to post-conflict countries' reconstruction and development. They called upon the international community to assist MENA countries in meeting their development goals.
5. They agreed to strongly condemn terrorism and confront extremism, in all its forms and manifestations, whenever, wherever, and by whomsoever committed and called on countries of the region to adopt a zero-tolerance approach to

terrorism. They expressed their commitment to prevent, combat and counter terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the cross-border movement of terrorists, as well as terrorism financing networks and safe havens, dismantling terrorist training camps, in accordance to international law, and swiftly bringing perpetrators of terrorism to justice. They pointed out that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. They affirmed their unwavering commitment to contributing further to the global efforts to prevent and counter the threat of terrorism on the basis of respect for international law, in particular the UN Charter, international human rights law, international humanitarian law, and international refugee law, emphasizing that States have the primary responsibility in countering terrorism, with the UN continuing to play a central and coordinating role in this area. They called for further consolidation and strengthening of the working methods of UN Security Council Sanctions Committees to ensure their effectiveness, responsiveness and transparency. While recognizing that there is no justification for terrorism, a comprehensive approach by the whole international community is needed to effectively prevent, combat and counter terrorist activities, including through measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism in line with the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy. They rejected double standards in countering terrorism and confronting extremism. They called for the expeditious finalization and adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism within the UN framework.

6. They expressed their commitment to the promotion of the principles of tolerance and peaceful coexistence, and the adoption of measures to jointly address hate speech, racism, gender discrimination and extremism, in line with the provisions of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2686 and other relevant United Nations Resolutions.

7. They expressed grave concern at the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, marked by the unprecedented escalation of violence in the Gaza Strip, following the Hamas' attack on October 7 2023, and as a result of the Israeli military offensive that led to more than 50,000 deaths among Palestinians, mostly women and children, as reported by the UN Secretary-General, mass forced displacement of civilians, and widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, places of worship, and UN facilities. They reiterated the need for full respect of international humanitarian law and human rights law, as well as for immediate, safe, unhindered, and sustained humanitarian access and the provision of aid at scale and in accordance with the basic principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence reaffirmed by relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and emphasized that unconditional humanitarian access must be facilitated and not be used for political purposes.

8. They deplored the collapse of the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, condemned the resumption of Israeli attacks against Gaza, and urged all parties to fully respect and comply with the terms of the agreement, including the release of all hostages and detainees held in violation of international law.

9. They recalled that the Gaza Strip is an inseparable part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, underlined, in this regard, the importance of unifying the West Bank and the Gaza Strip under the Palestinian Authority, and reaffirmed the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to their independent State of Palestine.

10. They called on the international community to support the Palestinian Authority in undergoing reforms to fulfill the Palestinians' legitimate aspirations for independence and statehood, as well as the expeditious reconstruction of the civil infrastructure of the territory, with a central role by the Palestinians, as agreed in the Emergency Arab Summit on Palestine of 4 March 2025, and they noted with appreciation the initiative to convene an upcoming pledging conference to be held in Cairo.

11. They underscored that efforts to stabilize and rebuild Gaza should go hand in hand with a just and lasting political resolution of the protracted conflict, based on the relevant UN Resolutions. They also stressed the priority of fully implementing all three stages of the Gaza ceasefire agreement. In that respect, they exhorted the parties concerned to engage in good faith in further negotiations to achieve the permanent cessation of hostilities, the full withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip, and the release of all hostages and detainees held in violation of international law.

12. They expressed their firm opposition to the forced displacement, temporary or permanent, under any pretexts, of any of the Palestinian population from the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Forced displacement of Palestinians would constitute a grave breach of international law, including international humanitarian law, and would also pose a serious threat to the stability of the region.

13. They strongly condemned the killing of humanitarian aid workers and the targeting of humanitarian premises in Gaza, which have significantly impacted humanitarian operations in the Strip and reportedly led to the withdrawal of 30% of the UN's international staff, as well as constitute serious violations of international humanitarian law.

14. They recognized the importance of enhanced international efforts to uphold international humanitarian law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

15. They reasserted their steadfast support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and stressed the need to fully respect the mandate, bestowed on it by the UNGA, for the provision of basic services to Palestine refugees in its five fields of operations. In this context, they deplored the implementation of legislation approved by the Israeli parliament on October 28, 2024, that aim to severely hinder the activities of UNRWA in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. They noted, in this regard, the provisional measures of the International Court of Justice in the legal proceedings instituted by South Africa against Israel, which, inter alia, reaffirmed Israel's obligation to ensure the provision of humanitarian aid in Gaza. Cognizant of

General Assembly Resolution ES-10/25, they also expressed their conviction that, until a just and lasting solution to the plight of Palestine refugees is reached, in accordance with international law, including international humanitarian law, and relevant UN Resolutions, UNRWA will remain essential and irreplaceable.

16. They reaffirmed that a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can only be achieved by peaceful means and depends on the fulfillment of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination. They reiterated their unwavering commitment to the two-state solution, based on international law, including relevant UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, and the Arab Peace Initiative, with an independent and viable State of Palestine living side by side with Israel, in peace and security, in line with internationally recognized borders of June 1967, which includes the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

17. In this context, they welcomed the launching of the “Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution” and expressed their commitment to multilateral initiatives aimed at resuming concrete negotiations with a view to implementing this objective. They also look forward to contributing to the outcomes of the upcoming High-level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two State Solution, to be held in June, in New York.

18. They condemned the provocative statement regarding plans for the imposition of Israeli sovereignty over the Occupied West Bank and the intensification of settlement activity in the West Bank, as well as with demolitions of Palestinian residences and structures, including in East Jerusalem. They reiterated that settlements are illegal under international law and that any settlement activity must be stopped and reversed. They deplored the escalation of military operations carried out by Israeli forces in the West Bank and condemned the significant increase in attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian citizens. They agreed that military operations in the West Bank must cease and that all individuals involved in acts of violence must be held accountable.

19. They took note of the advisory opinion of July 19 2024 of the International Court of Justice, “on the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem”, which determined, inter alia, that the continued presence of the State of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is unlawful and must be brought to an end as rapidly as possible; that all States are under the obligation not to recognize any changes in the physical character or demographic composition, institutional structure or status of the territory occupied by Israel on 5 June 1967, including East Jerusalem; that Israel is under the obligation to cease immediately all new settlement activities, and to evacuate all settlers from the Occupied Palestinian Territory; and that Israel is not entitled to sovereignty over or to exercise sovereign powers in any part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory on account of its occupation.

20. They reasserted their unwavering support for the Palestinian request to become a full member of the United Nations.

21. They recalled UN Security Council resolution 2334 (2016) and, in this regard, rejected any decisions and actions which purport to alter the character, status or demographic composition, as well as any measures of de facto or de jure annexation, of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and declared that such unilateral decisions have no legal effect. They emphasized the inadmissibility of altering the historical status of Jerusalem's holy sites and reasserted their support to the Hashemite custodianship.

22. They reasserted their firm support for Lebanon's stability, security, sovereignty, political independence, and territorial integrity. They welcomed the election of a new President and the appointment of a new cabinet in Lebanon and expressed their strong support for the Lebanese government in addressing the country's economic, political, and security challenges.

23. They welcomed the ceasefire in Lebanon and called on all parties to strictly adhere to its terms and to fully implement UNSC Resolution 1701. They condemned the continued violations of the ceasefire agreement and the frequent violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon. They called on Israel to respect the articles of the ceasefire agreement entered into with the Lebanese Government, to withdraw its occupying forces from the five sites in Southern Lebanon.

24. They highlighted the vital role played by UNIFIL and agreed it is imperative to ensure the safety, security, and freedom of movement of all United Nations personnel and equipment, as well as to respect the integrity of UN premises. They condemned all attacks against UNIFIL installations and personnel and emphasized that such attacks are a violation of international law and UN Security Council Resolution 1701.

25. They reaffirmed their commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity, and territorial integrity of Syria and called for a peaceful and inclusive Syrian-led and Syrian-owned UN-facilitated political process, based on the principles of Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015), in a manner that ensures the security and well-being of the civilian population and where all political and social components of Syria's society are represented and protected, including women and youth, without any discrimination based on race, sect, or religion. They condemned the widespread violence perpetrated in Syria's Latakia and Tartus provinces since 6 March, including mass killings of civilians among the Alawite community, the continuation of terrorist activities by ISIL and Al-Qaeda affiliates in Syria, the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters' presence in Syrian territory as well as the risk of transferring of terrorists from Syria to regional countries. Syria should firmly oppose all forms of terrorism and extremism. They stressed their continued support for the efforts of the UN Special Envoy for Syria. They encouraged the international community to support the post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation of Syria. They condemned the Israeli occupation of the demilitarized zone in Syria, in violation of international law and the 1974

Disengagement Agreement, as well as Israeli attacks against the Syrian territory and called for the immediate and full withdrawal of the Israeli forces from Syria including the occupied Syrian Golan. They took note of and encouraged efforts aiming at integrating military institutions into the Syrian State with a clear and unequivocal exclusion of any parties involved in terrorist activities.

26. They reasserted their support for Yemen's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity, as well as for a peaceful, comprehensive, and inclusive political settlement to the Yemeni crisis. They underscored the urgency of addressing the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

27. They stressed the importance of ensuring the exercise of navigational rights and freedoms of vessels of all states in the Red Sea and Bab Al-Mandab Strait, in accordance with international law. They encouraged enhanced diplomatic efforts by all parties to that end, including by addressing the causes of the conflict, and continued support for dialogue and Yemen's peace process under UN auspices.

28. They reiterated their strong commitment to Iraq's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity, as well as expressed their continuous support and engagement to promote stability and economic development in Iraq. For this purpose, they underscored the collective responsibility of the international community in assisting the Iraqi government in the implementation of policies and programs to increase investment, trade, and overall social development in Iraq. They reaffirmed their opposition to any external interference in Iraq's domestic affairs, and supported Iraq's efforts to maintain its sovereignty and independence, promote economic reconstruction and to play a greater role in regional affairs.

29. They noted the latest developments regarding nuclear program of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the recent imposition of new unilateral sanctions against Iran, and reiterated that political and diplomatic engagement remains the only viable and practical option in this regard. They underlined the necessity for maintaining favourable conditions required for diplomatic efforts. They also stressed the necessity for all States to refrain from any action that undermines the technical, objective and impartial work of the international Atomic Energy Agency. They encouraged Iran's continued cooperation with the IAEA and stressed the need to fully respect its right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

30. They rejected recent threats against the Islamic Republic of Iran and called for the de-escalation of the situation, which has the potential to undermine international peace and security. They underlined, in this context, the provisions of article 2(4) of the Charter of the United Nations, which establishes that States "shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State".

31. They stressed their support for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, and national unity of Libya, as well as for a "Libyan-led and Libyan-owned" political process with UN-led mediation. They acknowledged, in this regard, the endeavors of regional organizations and the neighboring countries of

Libya. They reiterated their respect for the will and free choice of the Libyan people, called on all parties to strengthen consultation and dialogue, as well as to refrain from any actions that could undermine the October 2020 ceasefire, and emphasized the need for all foreign forces, foreign fighters, and mercenaries to withdraw from Libya without further delay in a synchronized, phased, gradual, and balanced manner. They welcomed the efforts of the League of Arab States and the African Union, including its High-Level Committee for Libya, to restore stability and foster the unification of Libya. They reaffirmed their call to hold simultaneous, free, and fair presidential and parliamentary elections as soon as possible. They also reiterated their call on all parties to create necessary conditions for holding elections, based on a sound and agreed constitutional framework.

32. They expressed grave concern over the escalating violence and humanitarian crisis in Sudan and reiterated their call for an immediate, permanent and unconditional ceasefire and peaceful resolution of the conflict with engagement in peace talks as the only way to end this conflict, sustained, urgent and unimpeded access of the Sudanese population to humanitarian assistance, and the scaling up of humanitarian assistance to Sudan and neighboring states. They condemned the attack on the residence of the Head of Mission of the United Arab Emirates Embassy to Sudan on 29 September 2024, causing extensive damage to the premises located in a residential area in Khartoum. They stressed the fundamental principle of the inviolability of diplomatic and consular premises, and the obligations on receiving States including under the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.

33. They welcomed the convening of the High-level Humanitarian Conference for the People of Sudan on 14 February 2025 co-hosted by AU, Ethiopia, IGAD, and UAE, in coordination with the UN.

34. They expressed deep concern about the disruptive effect of unilateral coercive measures, inter alia in the form of unilateral economic sanctions and secondary sanctions that are contrary to international law, as well as their far-reaching implications for the human rights, including the right to development, of the general population of targeted states in the region. Such measures undermine the UN Charter, the multilateral trading system, the sustainable development and environmental agreements. They called on all countries to refrain from introducing unilateral coercive measures and trade restrictions inconsistent with the UN Charter, international law, relevant provisions of the World Trade Organization and other multilateral trade rules that might have a direct or indirect negative impact on trade flows. They also underscored the need for dialogue and multilateral cooperation to address international disputes and promote stability.

35. They agreed to meet again under India's chairship of BRICS in 2026. They also reiterated the importance of holding regular consultations on the Middle East and North Africa, including at the UN.