

CSIR Diplomatic Insights

BRICS Foreign Minister Meeting (May 15-16th 2026): Cultural Connect

The BRICS Foreign Ministers met in New Delhi, India, on 14–15 May 2026 and “reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the BRICS strategic partnership across its three pillars: political and security cooperation, economic and financial cooperation, and cultural and people-to-people exchanges.” The Ministers emphasised the protection of cultural heritage, particularly in conflict-affected regions, and called for stronger efforts to prevent the destruction and illicit trafficking of cultural property. They stressed the importance of restitution and repatriation of cultural artefacts to their countries of origin. Recognising the diversity of BRICS societies and economies, the Ministers noted that members are affected differently by unjustified unilateral protectionist measures inconsistent with WTO rules and reaffirmed the need to promote a fair, stable, and predictable international environment for sustainable and mutually beneficial development.

The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of BRICS people-to-people exchanges in promoting mutual understanding, friendship, and cooperation, and welcomed India’s chairship priorities in this area. They recognised that such exchanges contribute to both social progress and economic development. The Ministers also called for greater respect for cultural diversity, heritage, innovation, and creativity, while promoting stronger international people-to-people cooperation. “They further recalled the adoption of the UNGA Resolution A/RES/78/286 on the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations.”¹

The Ministers recognised the valuable contribution of partner countries to BRICS cooperation and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening BRICS based on mutual respect, sovereign equality, solidarity, inclusiveness, consultation, and consensus. The discussions also covered people-to-people exchanges, cultural cooperation, women’s role in peacebuilding, disaster resilience, outer-space governance, and protection of cultural heritage.

¹ Chair’s Statement and Outcome Document at BRICS Foreign Ministers’ Meeting. (May 15, 2026). *Ministry of External Affairs Government of India*. New Delhi <https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/41144>