



## Joint Meeting of Foreign Ministries and Space Agencies

13 April 2021



The Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India hosted a virtual Joint Meeting of BRICS Foreign Ministries and Space Agencies on 13 April 2021. This was the first time that such a meeting has been organized under the BRICS format. The meeting was inaugurated by Additional Secretary Economic Relations and India's BRICS Sous Sherpa, Mr. P Harish. The meeting was chaired by Ms. Eenam Gambhir, Director, Multilateral Economic Relations and was also attended by Joint Secretary, Disarmament and International Security Affairs, Mr. Sandeep Arya, and Dr. D Gowrishankar, Director International Cooperation, ISRO.

The meeting was also attended by Brazil's Mr. Benhur Peruch Viana, Head of the Division of Sea, Antarctica and Space - Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr.



Alessandro José Ferreira Carvalho, Head of International Cooperation - Brazilian Space Agency; China's Ms. CAI Yue, Deputy Director, Department of International Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ms. JIANG Hui, Director, International Cooperation Department, China National Space Administration; Russia's Mr. Pavel KNYAZEV, Russian Sous-Sherpa in BRICS, Ambassador-at-Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Vasily GUDNOV, Head of division, State Space Corporation Roscosmos; and South Africa's Mr. Ben Joubert, Acting Chief Director: Regional Organisations, Department of International Relations and Cooperation and Dr Humbulani Mudau, Chief Director: Space Science and Technology, Department of Science and Innovation.

Russia congratulated India for the thoughtfully selected date of the meeting, which followed closely on the heels of the 60th anniversary of Soviet astronaut, Yuri Gagarin's, foray into outer space on 12 April 1961.

The delegates negotiated the Draft BRICS Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation Agreement. Addressing the delegates, Mr. P Harish, stressed the importance of the document for strengthening and enhancing BRICS cooperation in the peaceful use of outer space with applications across an array of sectors such as agriculture and food security, disaster management and water resource management amongst others. He also thanked delegates for agreeing to meet in this new format to help expedite outstanding negotiations.

The participants held an in-depth discussion on the outcomes of the document and at the conclusion of the meeting, expressed their support for India's suggestion to finalize the document at the earliest given to its importance for all BRICS partners.

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