

Remarks by EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar at BRICS Session on Reforms of Global Governance and Multilateral System

May 15, 2026

Open Session: Reforms of Global Governance and Multilateral System

Excellencies, Colleagues, Namaskar and a very good morning.

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this session on reforms of global governance and the multilateral system. I thank all delegations, including members and partner countries, for their active participation. The breadth of our engagement reflects the importance we attach to strengthening multilateral cooperation in a rapidly changing world.

We meet at a time when the effectiveness of global governance and the credibility of multilateralism are under increasing scrutiny. The world today is more interconnected, complex, and multipolar than when many of our current institutions were created. Yet, the structures that underpin global governance have not kept pace with these changes.

In this context, our discussion on reform is both timely and necessary. From declining trust to inefficiencies in decision-making, multilateral frameworks are under considerable strain. As BRICS nations, we have a shared responsibility to advance a more inclusive, representative, and responsive global governance architecture.

Reform is therefore not a matter of choice, but of necessity. It is essential to ensure that multilateralism remains relevant and effective in addressing contemporary challenges.

Excellencies,

India has consistently advocated reformed multilateralism; one that reflects current realities and responds to the aspirations of emerging markets and developing countries. As members of the United Nations, we meet as sovereign equals. This is not merely a principle, but is the foundation of credible multilateralism. Let me make four points in this regard.

First, the reform of the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies remains central. The membership of the United Nations has expanded significantly, and its responsibilities have grown. Yet, key structures, particularly the Security Council, continue to reflect an earlier era. Without meaningful reform, including expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories, the effectiveness and credibility of the UN will remain constrained. Representation of Asia, Africa, and Latin America is essential.

Second, we have seen some progress in the actual deliberations. The working methods of the Inter-Governmental Negotiations process has improved. Various countries and groupings have had opportunities to present their thoughts. This is moving a general discussion into greater specificity. It is time to move to text-based negotiations. BRICS itself has debated this issue deeply, especially at the Johannesburg Summit. Our outcome documents have reflected

that consensus. But much more has to be done to make reform a reality.

Third, there is an urgent need to reform the international financial architecture. Today's economic challenges include vulnerabilities in supply chains, pressures on food and energy security, and inequalities in access to critical resources. Multilateral Development Banks must become more robust, more responsive, and better equipped to mobilize resources at scale. Development and climate finance must be more accessible and aligned with national priorities.

Fourth, the multilateral trading system must be strengthened and reformed. Non-market practices, concentration of supply chains, and uncertain market access have exposed the global economy to new risks. A rules-based, fair, open, and inclusive trading system, with the WTO at its core, remains essential. At the same time, it must address asymmetries and reflect the concerns of developing countries.

Excellencies,

Reforms must also extend beyond structures to processes. Multilateralism must be democratic, representative and effective. India's approach to multilateralism has been guided by dialogue, cooperation, and bridging differences.

Excellencies,

Reformed multilateralism must be grounded in respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, adherence to international law, and recognition of diverse national circumstances. It must promote trust, ensure fairness, and uphold responsibility.

Excellencies,

In conclusion, the message from our times is clear. Cooperation is essential. Dialogue is necessary. Reform is overdue.

We must work together not only to manage global challenges, but to shape a more democratic, representative and equitable international order.

India remains committed to working with all partners in advancing the goal of reformed and effective multilateralism.

Thank you.

New Delhi

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