

This Is What a Tectonic Shift Looks Like

Aug. 23—It was the perfect metaphor for the rising power of the Global Majority in its unstoppable drive to put an end to 500 years of colonial-style economic looting, backwardness and wars.

On Wednesday, Aug. 23, in the middle of the three-day BRICS summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, India succeeded in landing their Chandrayaan-3 module on the surface of the Moon, near its South Pole. One of the tens of millions around the world intently following the live feed from the Indian Space Research Organization's Mission Room, was Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who watched from South Africa where he was attending the BRICS Summit, along with the heads of state or government of Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa.

Immediately after the stunning success, Modi addressed the ISRO center scientists—and the world. “India’s successful Moon mission is not India’s alone,” he said. “This success belongs to all humanity.... I am confident that all countries in the world, including those from the Global South, are capable of achieving such feats. We can all aspire for the Moon and beyond.”

President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa, the summit’s host, responded: “This for us as the BRICS family, is a momentous occasion, and we rejoice with you,” he said to applause.

The proceedings of the Wednesday plenary session of the BRICS summit, today, which heard addresses from the leaders of all five BRICS nations, underscored that a worldwide tectonic shift is indeed underway, fed by the understanding that a new architecture of peace and development is now a condition of survival. (Excerpts of each of the five speeches can be found below in the Documentation section of this Morning Briefing.) “The world is changing,” President Ramaphosa emphasized in his opening remarks. The world is facing an extraordinarily dangerous crisis, both economically

and politically, and “we are well aware of where this path could lead,” Brazilian President Lula da Silva stressed. “The world needs to understand that the risks involved are unacceptable for humanity.” Furthermore, “it is unacceptable that global military spending in a single year exceeds \$2 trillion, while the FAO tells us that 735 million people go hungry every day in the world.” Lula urged that a peaceful, negotiated solution to the Ukraine crisis be found, and praised the peace proposals made by three of the BRICS members: China, South Africa and Brazil.

Chinese President Xi Jinping also stressed that “the world has entered a new period of turbulence and transformation,” and that peace and development must go hand in hand. As he had emphasized in his remarks to the BRICS Business Forum on Aug. 22, “Should we work together to maintain peace and stability, or just sleepwalk into the abyss of a new Cold War?” The summit, he explained, “is an endeavor to expand the architecture of peace and development.” That new architecture must assure the security of all nations, large and small, various leaders stressed.

As for overcoming poverty and underdevelopment, President Ramaphosa stated that “we know that poverty, inequality and underdevelopment are the biggest challenges facing humankind.” President Xi said that “development is an inalienable right of all countries, not a privilege reserved for a few,” and that “we need to fully leverage the role of the [BRICS] New Development Bank.” President Putin called on the BRICS to “build up partnership in science and innovations, healthcare, education, and humanitarian ties as a whole,” and emphasized that they should “develop interbank cooperation, [and] expand the use of national currencies.”

President Lula elaborated on the role of the NDB as a source of non-dollar credit to be channeled to development projects that raise physical-economic

productivity—a decisive topic that was taken up in NDB President Dilma Rousseff’s report to the leaders. “Through the New Development Bank,” Lula stated, “we can offer our own financing alternatives, tailored to the needs of the Global South. I am sure that, under the leadership of my colleague Dilma Rousseff, the Bank will rise to these challenges. The creation of a currency for trade and investment transactions between BRICS members increases our payment options and reduces vulnerabilities.”

There was also unanimity among the five leaders on the desirability of expanding the BRICS—23 countries have already applied for membership—although the specific mechanism and principles of that expansion were left to be announced on Thursday, Aug. 24. Prime Minister Modi stated unambiguously: “India fully supports the expansion of the BRICS membership.” President Xi said: “I am glad to see the growing enthusiasm of developing countries about BRICS cooperation, and quite a number of them have applied to join the BRICS cooperation mechanism. We need ... win-win cooperation to bring more countries into the BRICS family, so as to pool our wisdom and strength.”

But perhaps most indicative of the sea-change underway, of the emerging new paradigm of cooperation and dialogue of civilizations that was palpable at the BRICS summit, are the numerous comments from the leaders about the common philosophical roots and commitments of each of their cultures to all of Humanity, to the good of mankind. Indian Prime Minister Modi began his remarks to the plenary by noting that “at some distance from here is the Tolstoy Farm, which was built by Mahatma Gandhi 110 years ago. By combining the great ideas of India, Eurasia and

Africa, Mahatma Gandhi laid a strong foundation for our unity and mutual harmony.”

Sounding a similar note, President Xi wrote an article published in a number of South African newspapers on Aug. 21: “South Africa’s Ubuntu philosophy advocates compassion and sharing. It resonates well with the values of Confucianism—‘love the people and all beings and seek harmony among all nations.’” And he concluded his remarks to the plenary session with the following call:

“As an African proverb puts it, ‘If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.’ The philosophy of Ubuntu, which believes that ‘I am because we are,’ highlights the interdependence and interconnectedness of all peoples. Similarly, harmonious coexistence has been the aspiration of the Chinese nation for thousands of years. China is ready to work with BRICS partners to pursue the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind, enhance the strategic partnership, and deepen cooperation across the board. As fellow BRICS members, we should meet our common challenges with a shared sense of mission, shape a brighter future with a common purpose, and march together on the journey toward modernization.”

Schiller Institute founder Helga Zepp-LaRouche responded to the historic BRICS summit, and what must now follow: “Only the Global North is now missing” to bring about a true renaissance for all Mankind. That is the central theme of Zepp-LaRouche’s widely circulating petition, “Appeal to the Citizens of the Global North: We Must Support the Construction of a New Just World Economic Order!” and of her weekly live online dialogue today, “In Light of the BRICS Summit, Let’s Talk About Ending the Isolation of the Global North!”

Stay in touch with the LaRouche Organization (202) 968-2893