

Sandton set for big BRICS Summit

By [Suren Naidoo](#)

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A "ring of steel" has been thrown around the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg as more than 2500 delegates, including some 20 heads of state, are set to descend on the centre for the high profile 10th BRICS Summit, which starts tomorrow, 25 July 2018.



The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (Dirco) confirmed yesterday that all five BRICS heads of state would be attending the BRICS Summit – an annual meeting of the powerful bloc of developing nations. Due to the profile of the event and number of heads of state attending, there is a major police and security presence in the Sandton CBD and several roads surrounding the convention centre have been closed.

Briefing media yesterday, Luwellyn Landers, Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, confirmed President Cyril Ramaphosa and chair of BRICS, would be joined by Michel Temer, President of Brazil; Xi Jinping, President of China; Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India; and, Vladimir Putin, President of Russia, in participating in the 2018 BRICS Summit.

Landers said the BRICS heads of state would be joined on Friday by leaders from other African and emerging economies, including Rwanda, Uganda, Namibia, Mozambique, Angola, Senegal, Togo, Gabon, Argentina, Turkey and Jamaica. Several other leaders from Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) countries, together with bosses from Nepad and the New Development Bank, as well as large business and media contingents from the BRICS nations are also attending.

The BRICS Summit will commence tomorrow with a meeting of the BRICS Business Council and government delegations. BRICS heads of state will meet and hold talks in a separate high-level retreat and join the summit on Thursday, while leaders from other African and emerging economies invited to attend will meet BRICS leaders at the summit on Friday.

Landers said: "As part of BRICS, SA also uses its membership to champion the cause of our continent, Africa. Our theme for the summit talks to the need to strengthen the relationship between BRICS and Africa. On Friday, BRICS heads of state will have time to interact with African leaders on how best we can bring about inclusive growth and shared prosperity."



He added: "The 10th BRICS Summit will be an important milestone as it represents a decade of BRICS cooperation. The summit will culminate in the adoption of what we call the Johannesburg Declaration, which will include our joint commitment for the year ahead."

Landers said SA had proposed the following for adoption at this year's BRICS Summit:

- The establishment of a working group on peace-keeping;
- The establishment of a Vaccine Research Centre, for collaboration in BRICS vaccine innovation and research;
- The establishment of a BRICS tourism track for cooperation;
- Leveraging the strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership towards the pursuit for the '4th Industrial Revolution'; and,
- The establishment of a BRICS gender and women's forum.

Lindiwe Sisulu, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, said SA had put in months of intensive preparation for BRICS and she was confident that the summit would be a success. She said the summit would focus on enhancing business opportunities and strengthening diplomatic relations between BRICS nations as well as relations between BRICS and other African and developing nations.

"This is a milestone for us, with 10 years of BRICS and SA hosting the 10th BRICS Summit. To mark this milestone, during their retreat, the heads of state will also be going to the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage site and create clay footprints," said Sisulu.

Meanwhile, Elaine Jack, City Improvement District Manager of Sandton Central Management District, said Sandton was ready and proud to be hosting the 10th BRICS Summit. "As the economic hub of SA and the continent, Sandton Central is home to the JSE, Sandton Convention Centre and most major businesses, so it is an ideal location to host the BRICS Summit and global leaders in government and business. The event will also have positives economic benefits, not just from

the deals signed, but the number of delegates staying at Sandton hotels and shopping and exploring the vibrant Sandton CBD."

** The roads that will be closed around the convention centre in the Sandton CBD due to the BRICS Summit this week, include sections of Maude Street, West Street, Alice Lane and 5th Street. Residents and the public have been urged to take note of the road closures and resultant diversions. Commuters and affected tenants in buildings surrounding the Sandton Convention Centre have also been urged to be patient and cooperate with the police during the summit.*

ABOUT SUREN NAIDOO

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