

A call from Durban to *rebuild BRICS*, bottom-up

oppose neoliberalism, subimperialism and eco-destruction, 23-27 March 2013

Durban's hosting of the Brazil-Russia-India-China-SA summit next March requires critical civil society to share views ranging from local to global. We support bottom-up unity of peoples in these countries and their hinterlands, collaborating on analysis, advocacy and activism. Our 'counter-summit' – including a community/labour/environmental teach-in on 23 March, Durban reality tours on 24 March, a university-based conference on 25-26 March, and a rally outside the International Convention Centre on 27 March – will draw the world's attention to the most dangerous BRICS state policies, corporate and parastatal power plays, and these countries' extreme uneven development:

*** socio-economic rights violations**, including severe inequality, poverty, unemployment, disease, violence (especially against women), inadequate education and other forms of unnecessary suffering;

*** political and civil rights violations**, such as increased prohibitions on protest, rising media repression and official secrecy, activist jailings and torture, police hit squads and even massacres in many BRICS sites, including Durban;

*** regional domination by BRICS economies**, since signs of 'subimperialism' are emerging both through corporate exploitation of the hinterlands, and through BRICS legitimisation of 'Washington Consensus' neoliberalism – for example, in the recent donation of \$100 billion of our taxes to the International Monetary Fund, or in the desire of China, Brazil and India to revitalise the World Trade Organisation, or in India's failure to continue supplying generic medicines (especially the AIDS drugs so important to us in Durban, with more HIV+ people than any other city on earth);

*** our elites' orientation to eco-destructive, consumerist and climate-frying maldevelopment works well for corporate and parastatal profits, but is reaching crisis proportions in all the BRICS, as witnessed by the Marikana Massacre carried out by SA police on behalf of Lonmin on August 16, and in South Durban as witnessed by the \$30 billion in white-elephant state infrastructure subsidies for chaotic port, freight and petrochemical industry expansion (with yet more labour-broking exploitation) – now vigorously challenged by the communities that will be destroyed.**

In sum, the tendency to join rather than fight global injustice sets BRICS leaders against the interests of their peoples. Join us in Durban in March 2013.

It is time the BRICS went under the microscope, so their so-called 'development bank' and the currency cooperation deals anticipated from this summit are scrutinised. It is time for popular voices to be heard, *demanding BRICS be rebuilt bottom up, to serve people and planet, not corporate profits.*

Initial organisations making this call (more to come): Centre for Civil Society (University of KwaZulu-Natal), groundWork, and the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance. For more information contact Patrick at pbond@mail.ngo.za, Bobby at bobby@groundwork.org.za or Desmond at desmond@sdceango.co.za

