

# *South African envoy affirms BRICS is not anti-West*

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**The bloc promotes the interests of the developing world rather than rivaling others, according to Pretoria's ambassador, Anil Sooklal \*\*\* © Twitter / @BRICSza**

Johannesburg, August 17 (RHC)-- The South African ambassador to BRICS, Anil Sooklal, has dismissed claims that the bloc is competing with Western alliances such as the G7, describing such assertions as an "unfortunate narrative."

Speaking earlier this week at the BRICS Inward Buying and Investment Business Forum in Johannesburg, the diplomat insisted it is incorrect to label the group as "anti-West." "What we do seek is to advance the agenda of the Global South and to build a more inclusive, representative, just, fair global architecture," Sooklal said.

The investment forum is a precursor to the main BRICS leaders' summit, which will also take place in Johannesburg later this month. In an interview with RT, South Africa's trade and industry deputy minister, Fikile Majola, touted BRICS as a significant group and an influential force for change.

"We think it will be a game changer, and we will be grateful that this history-making event should happen in South Africa and here in Johannesburg," the minister said, referring to the August 22–24 summit. Ambassador Sooklal said on Monday that the group will discuss extending the use of local currencies in trade between member states at the gathering, which will be attended by at least 40 leaders and heads of government.

The BRICS New Development Bank has set a target for a third of its lending to be conducted in domestic currencies by 2026.

Also speaking to RT on the sidelines of the investment forum, Vincent Masoga, CEO of African Charm Technologies, claimed that BRICS-aligned businesses are being "blackmailed" by Western-based firms. According to Masoga, Western companies and allies believe that trade within the BRICS group is less significant.

"The difference in this case is that the trade relations that we are creating with the BRICS partners will not allow for exploitation. They will allow for the kind of development we want as Africans," he argued.

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