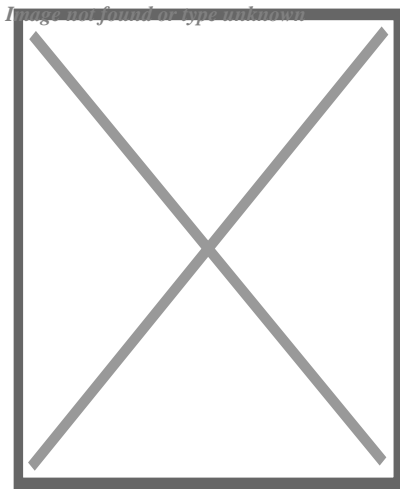


President of South Africa reaffirms country's position of non-alignment



Cyril Ramaphosa

Pretoria, May 16 (RHC) -- South African President Cyril Ramaphosa reiterated on Monday the country's policy of non-alignment, affirming that it will not take sides in a contest between global powers.

In his weekly message, Ramaphosa revealed that, with the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, extraordinary pressure has been put on South Africa to abandon its non-aligned position and take sides in what is, in effect, a contest between Russia and the West.

Other nations on the African continent and elsewhere in the world have come under similar pressure, he added.

"Drawing from our experience in the struggle against the apartheid regime," he said, "the country maintains in its foreign policy a firm belief in the value of an inclusive multilateral world order, and in the peaceful resolution of conflicts through dialogue."

And the South African president emphasized: "At all times we have been firm on this point: South Africa has not been and will not be drawn into a competition between global powers."

As a country, he recalled, "we are committed to the articles of the United Nations Charter, including the principle that all members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means."

Therefore, Ramaphosa continued, "we do not accept that our non-aligned position favors Russia over other countries, nor does it jeopardize our relations with other nations."

In that context, he said, in August, South Africa will host the leaders of Brazil, India, China and Russia for the summit of the Brics countries.

In all our interactions with these countries, he explained, we reaffirmed our belief that the United Nations remains the only viable mechanism through which the world community can strive for peace and common development.

However, he warned, the conflict in Ukraine has exposed weaknesses in the structure and practices of the United Nations. Thus, he noted, the composition of the UN Security Council, in particular, does not reflect the realities of today's global landscape, and should be reviewed for equitable representation and a more inclusive mechanism for resolving international disputes."

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