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South Africa joins BRIC as full member

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BEIJING, Dec. 23 (Xinhua) -- Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi Thursday said BRIC has accepted South Africa as a full member of the group, which currently includes Brazil, Russia, India and China.

Yang, during a phone conversation with his South African counterpart Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, said Chinese President Hu Jintao would issue an invitation letter to South African President Jacob Zuma, inviting him to attend the third BRIC leaders' meeting to be held in Beijing next year.

Yang said that China, as the current rotating chair of BRIC, believes South Africa's accession will promote the development of BRIC and enhance the cooperation of emerging market economies.

On behalf of the South African government and President Zuma, Nkoana-Mashabane said, "I would like to express our sincere appreciation towards President Hu's invitation."

South Africa is ready to step up communication and coordination with China and other BRIC members for mutually-beneficial cooperation, the minister added.

Later in the day, Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Wu Hailong forwarded to Bheki Langa, South African Ambassador to China, the letter by President Hu.

Editor: Mu Xuequan

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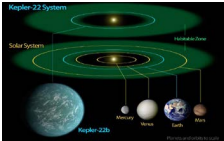
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